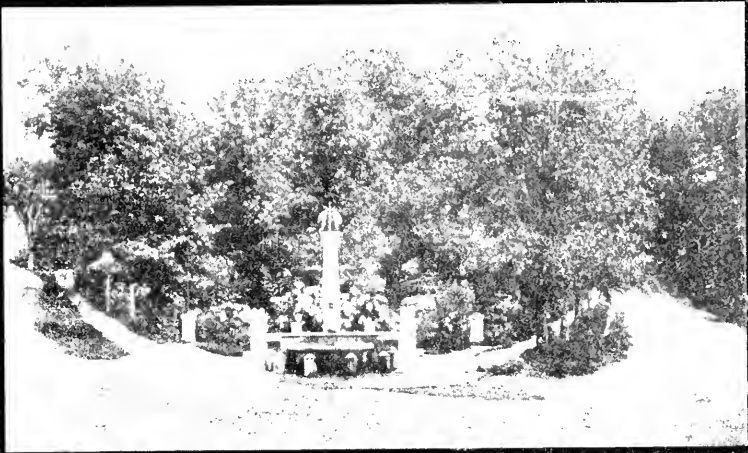


# THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN



FREDERIC S. DENNIS



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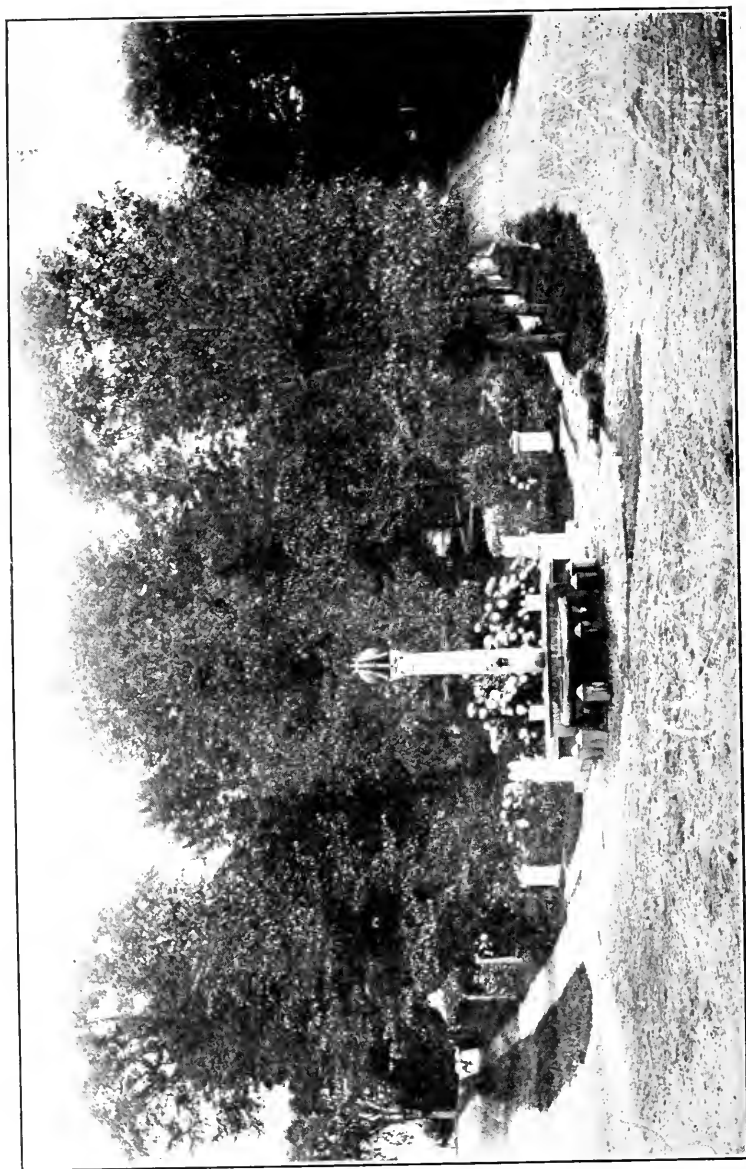




**THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN**







FOUNTAIN ERECTED BY MISS MARY ELDRIDGE IN MEMORY OF MR. JOSEPH BATTELL



*The*  
NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

BY  
FREDERIC S. DENNIS, M.D.

*Illustrated from photographs*

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DEDICATED  
IN LOVING MEMORY  
TO

*My Mother*

WHO WAS BORN IN A HOUSE  
NEAR THE GREEN

WHO PLAYED IN HER CHILDHOOD  
UPON THE GREEN

WHO LIVED MANY YEARS IN A  
HOUSE BUILT ON THE GREEN

WHO WAS MARRIED IN A MEETING HOUSE  
FACING THE GREEN



## FOREWORD

THIS brochure, published for private circulation only, will attain its object if it inspires the sacred duty of preserving the beautiful Village Green of Norfolk, and of handing it down in all its glory of historical tradition, local association and natural beauty, to future generations. As all the village greens of New England have a certain common significance, it opens with a description of them in general, and passes on to describe in detail the Norfolk Green, and to narrate the principal events that have occurred upon it.

The inspiration to write a brief historical sketch of my mother's birthplace was derived from the words of Rev. Dr. Joseph Eldridge in one of his Thanksgiving sermons, in which he said: "It is a duty of filial piety, as well as gratitude to the supreme disposer of events, to gather up, and preserve, and transmit all the memorials we can, of the labors, trials and achievements of those who have preceded us on the spot where we dwell."

A chronological table giving a brief history of the town from its incorporation to the present time is added.

Norfolk, Ct., June, 1917.



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**ORIGIN AND USES OF THE NEW  
ENGLAND VILLAGE GREEN**



## I

### ORIGIN AND USES OF THE NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE GREEN

**T**HE study of the origin of the Village Green carries us back to the early history of communal arrangements in country life; for it embraces the subject of communal possession of land as contrasted with individual ownership. It was this idea together with the idea of self-protection that produced the New England Village Green. Many centuries ago the idea of common ownership of land for economic reasons was prevalent, and in the early settlement of this country a germ of the original idea was inherent in the formation of the Green, but in addition the Green served as a central rallying point for the defense against the hostile Indians. As in later days the communal ownership was not required for economic reasons, or for self-defense, but for æsthetic and useful public purposes, the Village Green became the business centre of the town. The writer has consulted Biblical literature to see if any reference can be found

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in ancient times to a place set apart for the same purposes as the Village Green of modern times. The word "The Gate" is often used in Scripture to designate a place of public assemblies. This must not be mistaken for the Agora, or Forum, or Basilica of Greek or Roman origin, which were places for other purposes in which the Jews, the Christians and Pagans could share. It must not be confused with the Maktesh or common market-place of Jerusalem. Opposite the opening in the city wall of Jerusalem is mentioned a square where the people gathered. Harold B. Hunting, in his recently published book "The Story of Our Bible," gives a graphic description of a place called "The Gate," from which the following facts are gleaned: This public place is called in the Bible "The Gate" and it corresponds to the Green or common of the present day. At "The Gate" or square the people gathered to hear the news, to meet neighbors and friends and to exchange views upon the ordinary topics of the day. At "The Gate" the children played their games, the Judges convened to settle disputes among the farmers, and the Wise Men gathered to teach. It was at "The Gate" at Jerusalem that these Wise Men uttered their sayings that were collected and formed in great part the book of Proverbs. At "The Gate" individuals met by appointment to arrange between themselves some pri-

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vate affair or some special business, and here public conferences were held, and discussions took place on all matters of public interest. Thus it is evident that even a thousand years more or less before the birth of Christ the germ of the Village Green existed and that centuries previous to the greatest event that ever happened in this world the Village Green had its prototype and that the history of the Green or common is nearly as old as the history of man.

In the New England Village Green the Meeting House was first built, and the Green laid out in front of it. The tavern, the town hall, the post-office, the court house, the school house, and other public buildings were then placed round The Green for convenience. Besides these institutions there usually cluster around The Green those old Colonial residences which form a most attractive feature of the New England village, and in the early Colonial days there were placed upon it the whipping post, the stocks, the pillory, and other implements of torture which have now become obsolete.

The Green naturally became in early days the place of gathering for celebrations of all kinds; the rendezvous for voting in town elections; the trysting place for lovers; the location for sign boards, and mile stones leading out of the village; the place for town warnings and calls for town meetings. It was the arena for

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all sorts of athletic sports, such as base ball, foot ball, wicket playing, jumping, wrestling, tugs of war, and foot and horse races. It was the scene of military exercises and church and Sunday school picnics as well as for the display of merchandise, and a common rendezvous of soldiers departing for the French, Indian, Revolutionary, Civil, Spanish, Mexican and German wars. It has even been the site of the gallows upon which public hangings have taken place. It has always been the place for the erection of memorial tablets, monuments, and statues to commemorate the valor of the dead.

The Village Green in Colonial days was a rendezvous for the people in their agricultural fairs, thus obviating the cost and maintenance of special fair grounds, which are found now in many towns where these exhibitions occur. A cattle show, even in 1916, was held on the Green in East Hartland, Ct.

A characteristic feature of the Village Greens of early times was the absence of shade trees; with few exceptions this seems to have been the rule. In these modern times, when the Village Green is kept up, the presence of shade trees is as characteristic as their absence was formerly;—some of the New England Village Greens possess many beautiful and picturesque shade trees.

Many historic events have taken place on the Vil-





SOLDIER'S MONUMENT NEAR CENTER OF THE NORFOLK GREEN



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lage Green. There was the "training field" of the first Republic in the memorable years of 1775-1776: this fact alone gives to the Green a dignity and honor peculiar to itself. Few realize now what training day meant on the Green. The feeling of patriotism was dominant in the minds of our early ancestors and was manifested in many ways. An amusing anecdote has been handed down which appeared in the published account of the 200th anniversary of the Congregational Church in Little Compton, R. I., illustrating its fervor. It is said of Col. Richmond, who was making a visit to his brother Barzillai, that during morning devotions after the Bible reading, when prayer was about to be offered, he interrupted the proceedings with: "I have been here now three days and every morning you have prayed and haven't mentioned the American Congress, nor prayed for the success of the American arms. Now, by God! if you don't this morning I'll knock you down with this cane when you say Amen." Irreverent as this may seem, it illustrates the intensity of patriotic feeling that then prevailed.

In this same town the manœuvres of the Little Compton Home Guards took place on the commons or green during the Civil War. The company consisted of forty men under the command of General N. T. Church, mounted on a prancing black charger,

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in all the gorgeous paraphernalia that it was possible to wear. The little company marched over the Green, a village Squire beating the drum, his boy playing the fife.

The record of the Village Green at Concord illustrates in a forcible manner the uses of the New England Green and its relation to the community from shortly after the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620 down to the present day. It is rich in historical events and in the distinguished men whose names are associated with it. This Green may be taken as typical of New England Greens since all had the same origin and uses, though less fortunate in the possession of illustrious names. Emerson says of the Concord Green that "the stars stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the marble deserts of Egypt."

It was on this Green that Emerson and Channing spoke in words of eloquence which thrilled the entire country. Here strolled Winthrop and Dudley and Paul Revere; and later it saw Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau and Alcott, George William Curtis, Edward Everett, Judge Hoar, Theodore Parker, Miss Stebbins, Charlotte Cushman, Margaret Fuller, Whittier, Channing, Wendell Phillips, Longfellow, Lowell, James Freeman Clarke, Bancroft, Daniel Webster, John Elliot, French the sculptor of the Minute man

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monument, Dyar of whom it is said that he "erected the first real line and dispatched the first message over it by electricity ever sent by such means in America," Monroe the benefactor, and a long list of other famous men and women. In 1741 George Whitfield, the celebrated Evangelist, preached in the open air on the Concord Green, and it is said of him that his "silver voice melted his great congregation into tears."

It is a most strange historical coincidence that on April 19, 1689, the Concord militia was assembled on the Village Green and started from there for Boston to overthrow Governor Andros; that on April 19, 1775, at the very same hour, the militia was again assembled on the Concord Green to begin the fight of the Revolutionary war; that on April 19, 1812, the militia was again called out to participate in the second war with Great Britain; that on April 19, 1848, the soldiers met on the Concord Green to take up arms to fight in the Mexican war; that on April 19, 1861, the Concord Green was the place of assembly and the starting point of the brave boys to fight in the Civil War; and that on April 19, 1898, resolutions were passed by the Concord Militia to respond to the call for troops for the Spanish war. It was in April, 1917, that the United States declared war against Germany and on the 19th of April this anniversary was observed and celebrated throughout the country.

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The 19th of April is Patriot's day in Massachusetts and the principal incident was the trip of a horseback rider impersonating Paul Revere and in every city and town along the way he gave the alarm of the British attack. Finally it was on the 19th of April, 1917, that the American ship *Mongolia* fired the first shot at a submarine in the war with Germany.

On this Green stood the first Parish Meeting House, erected in 1712, where the first Provincial Congress was held in 1774. Facing it stood the famous Wright tavern, built in 1747, where, on the 19th of April, 1775, Major Pitcairn, the British officer said that "before the day was over he would stir the damned Yankee blood as well." Here stood also the Town House, "from whose turret rang out the bell that called the farmers to arms in 1775"; and the first one to respond to the alarm on the Green was the Rev. Wm. Emerson, the grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who came with his musket on his shoulder. On this Green was the store house for the war materials, which during the preceding winter, 1774, had been collected by patriotic citizens. Here the inhabitants of Concord assembled and "forbade the justices to open the court of sessions in consequence of a new British law which made the judges subservient to the crown." This Green was the place where the first steps were taken to overthrow British

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authority. Here too it was voted to raise one or more companies of minute men who should be ready at a moment's notice to march against the British forces. This Green is indeed memorable in history as the scene of one of the greatest events in the world; for here and on the Lexington Green the Revolutionary war was begun, to terminate in the creation of a great and new Republic the blessings of which we enjoy at the present time. Thus, on this Green, as President Dwight said, was "prefaced the history of a nation, the beginning of an empire." These interesting facts have been taken from "The Story of Concord."

Among New England Greens the Fairfield Green is one of unusual historical interest in connection with the development and growth of this nation. The important happenings on this Village Green afford another illustration of the multitudinous purposes for which a Green can serve. In studying the Fairfield Green it is apparent that the general plan has been observed; in fact it was among the first Greens in New England, and an example which other towns in New England have closely followed. Here were situated the Meeting House, the Jail, the School House, the Inn, the Whipping Post, the Stocks, the Colonial houses. The writer takes the liberty to borrow some facts from Child's hand book of local history of Fairfield, presented to him by his friend, the Hon. John

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H. Perry, whose renowned ancestors played such an important rôle in the history of Fairfield:

Religious services were held on the Fairfield Green in 1640 and in turn all the events which usually happen on Village Greens in general have taken place on this Green, and in addition there are some special events peculiar to Fairfield and worthy of special mention. It was on this Green that Ludlow in 1653 drilled his soldiers in preparation for an attack upon the Dutch. It was here that the witches were thrown into a pond on the west side of the Green. It was here that some of the ablest lawyers during a period of over two hundred years gathered in the court house and walked across this memorable Green. It was here in 1681 that a stone stockade was built around the Green to protect the town from attack by the Indians. It was here that Col. Andrew Burr drilled his soldiers to fight against the Indians and French and later General Silliman drilled the militia to take part in the Revolutionary war. It was on this Green that the Continental soldiers under General Whiting encamped after the burning of Fairfield in 1779. On this Green after this conflagration by Gen. Tryon the citizens also encamped. On this Green in 1812 the militia was drilled to fight the British and in 1815 a great celebration was held in honor of the declaration of Peace. Thousands were assembled on the Green





A VIEW OF THE CENTER OF THE NORFOLK GREEN



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and bands of music played, the bells were rung, the cannons were fired, and later in the day an ox was barbecued for the enjoyment of the people. In the evening a grand ball was given in Knapp's Tavern on the Green and the windows of every house were illuminated with candles and the Green with bonfires and torches.

On this same Green under the auspices of the Eunice Dennie Burr chapter of the American Revolution was held a great festivity in the observance of Independence Day. The exercises consisted of reading the Declaration of Independence, the delivery of patriotic speeches, the singing of the National Anthems, the playing of bands of music and the general observations of a gala day.

The Fairfield Green like other New England Greens is surrounded by beautiful colonial houses, which add to the beauty of the landscape,—notable among them, the residence of Miss Annie Burr Jennings, with its beautiful and artistic garden, which has become so renowned among the gardens of New England. In addition to Miss Jennings' interest in cultivated flowers and formal gardens, she has performed a great work for New England in her efforts to preserve the wild flowers, and especially the mountain laurel—the State flower of Connecticut.

The first battle of the Revolution was fought on the

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Village Green at Lexington in 1775 when Captain John Parker and seventy men met face to face six hundred trained British troops: where the bold Captain uttered the famous words which are carved on a boulder upon the site: "Stand your ground, don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war let it begin here." Eleven men were killed and ten wounded in this battle, which ushered in the dawn of American Liberty.

One hundred years later the celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of this first battle of the Revolution took place on this Green, and it was estimated that the Lexington Green witnessed the presence of at least one hundred thousand people. A salute of one hundred guns was fired at sunrise, the statues of Adams and Hancock in Carrara marble were unveiled, the pistols of Major Pitcairn were presented by Mrs. John P. Putnam, a grand collation in a huge tent was served and in the evening a ball of great magnificence took place.

The Lexington Green which was the scene of this great celebration was plotted out in the present dimensions in 1722. In 1824 Lafayette was welcomed, and in 1852 Kossuth was received, on this Green in the presence of a large assemblage.

The erection of the meeting and the schoolhouse in connection with the Green is illustrated by the

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Palisado Green at Windsor. John Brancker, in 1656-7, was the first schoolmaster in that historic town and John Wareham was the first pastor of the church, and in Jenkins's interesting history of the Boston Post Road, is spoken of as the first minister in New England who preached without notes. The Palisado Green was the centre of all kinds of activities, notably those connected with the colonial trade with England and the West Indies.

On the beautiful and broad Green at West Springfield a large boulder—a feature common to many New England Greens—bears the following inscription: "Here encamped Oct. 30th and 31st, 1777, General Riedesel and his Hessian soldiers on their way to Boston after Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga."

This label was placed by the George Washington Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, Springfield, Mass., erected A.D. 1904."

It was on this Green that Luke Day drilled the 400 men who belonged to the forces in Shay's rebellion. This fact furnishes an example of the Village Green as a place for drilling and training soldiers apart from the militia.

The New Haven Green was in 1775 the scene of unusual interest: the official visit of General George Washington as commander in chief of the continental army on his way to Cambridge to inspect the troops in

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Boston. He was enthusiastically welcomed by the citizens, and by the Yale students, Noah Webster leading the procession and playing his flute. In 1789, the New Haven Green was again the scene of memorable interest when as President of the United States of America Washington made his first official visit to New England. The President entered upon the Green at the corner of Church and Chapel Streets by a path which ran diagonally across it to the corner of College and Elm Streets. Mr. Howard Mansfield has written for the Yale Pageant of 1916 a most interesting description of this visit of President Washington to New Haven and is here quoted in his own words:

“Summoned by the joyous ringing of church bells the citizens in great numbers and in holiday attire are gathered to greet him. The undergraduates of Yale College who have come back for the occasion in advance of the opening of the college year are present on the scene wearing their caps and gowns, and with them are the candidates for admission. The flag of the new nation is everywhere displayed with the banner of the new State of Connecticut. Triumphal arches adorned with branches of brilliant autumnal foliage have been erected, and as the President approaches his pathway under the arches is strewn with garlands by gaily dressed maidens. His approach is heralded by

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the firing of the Presidential salute, and he is received with every mark of honor and affection and a universal outburst of patriotic fervor. His guard of honor is the second company of Governor's Foot Guards, under the command of Captain William Lyon, and is preceded by its drum and fife corps playing martial music.

"The President enters in civilian dress, on a white horse accompanied by his secretaries and attended by the Governor of the State, in civilian dress and the Governor's staff in appropriate uniform, all on horseback. On halting after passing through the triumphal arches, the President is met by the Lieutenant Governor, Oliver Wolcott, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Pierpoint Edward, the State Treasurer, Jedediah Huntington, and the Committee of the Legislature, on whose behalf Mr. Jas. Davenport, clerk of the House of Representatives, and Mr. George Wylls, Secretary of the Upper House, present the address of welcome from the Legislature, which the President receives and to which he makes a reply amid great applause. Another address is presented by President Stiles, of the College, specially representing a group of six Congregational ministers, who with the students, are gathered about him. To this address also the President replies. Following renewed applause the students sing "Gaudeamus" and

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the scene became one of unbounded enthusiasm, the students leading in cheers for the President.

“After the brief ceremonies are over, the martial music strikes up again, and the President with the Governor and his Staff and the guard of honor, proceeds across the Green acknowledging with evident appreciation the continuous greetings of the assembled citizens. The students separate and form a lane through which the procession passes, and then, closing their ranks, follow as an escort, cheering and waving flags. President Stiles and the ministers depart toward the college, the officers of the General Assembly and the Members of the Legislative Committee retire, and the citizens disperse in different directions with demonstrations of continuing enthusiasm.”

The Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon in his civic oration upon the public Green in New Haven on May 30, 1879, said:

“The Green was designed not as a park or mere pleasure ground, but a place for public buildings, for military parades and exercises, for the meeting of buyers and sellers, for the concourse of the people, for all such public uses as were reserved of old for the Forum at Rome, and the Agora (called in our English Bibles ‘the market’) at Athens and in more recent times for the great square of St. Marks in Venice, or the market place in many a city of those low countries with which



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some of our founders had been familiar before their coming to this New World. The Green in New Haven was also used as a place of flogging, as the site of the watch tower, and location of the prison, as a pasture for cattle and horses. The Green was also used as a burial place in very early colonial days, and George Whitfield is said to have preached on the Green in 1740. The sale of slaves took place on a Green as late as 1825. The town elections as well as the colony elections took place on the green in many places prior to the Revolutionary war."

The Greens in New England were the scenes of the receptions of Generals Washington and Rochambeau, General Lafayette, Presidents Polk, Monroe, Jackson and Buchanan, and other dignitaries; upon which occasions the troops were reviewed, cannons were fired, the church bells were rung, the trumpets were sounded, bonfires blazed, and a general jubilee followed.

The announcement of the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 was made on the New Haven Green by the firing of cannon, and in 1861 the same Green was a scene of great activity when it was proclaimed that Fort Sumter had been fired on, and volunteers were called for the Civil War.

In 1861 during the Civil War a scene was enacted on the Green in New Haven the description of which is

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taken from the book of the Yale Pageant of 1916, and written by Mr. Edwin Oviatt:

“Major Theodore Winthrop was killed at the beginning of the Civil War and he was the first Yale man and the first Union officer to fall in the war. Gen. Ben Butler under a flag of truce sent a messenger to request the Confederate officers to deliver the body of Major Winthrop. The request was respectfully granted and the body was returned to the Northern army and then brought to New Haven. The streets about the Green were draped and a military escort accompanied the body of Winthrop to the Grove St. cemetery. The soldiers ‘marched with reversed arms and to a dirge by its band and the tolling of the church bells on the Green.’ ”

Over fifty years ago, the old fashioned foot ball game was played by the students each year on the northwestern corner of the New Haven Green, where about one hundred men on each side fought. It was not the scientific foot ball game introduced in the Fall of 1872, but a rough scrimmage among the students.

The first horse show ever held in this country was on the Green at Springfield, Mass., in 1855. The Green at Cambridge was the scene of election for Governor in 1637, when John Winthrop was chosen. Mrs. Earle, the well-known writer, mentions another unique and beautiful scene that was observed on a

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village Green, a prize contest for the greatest quantity of work performed on the spinning wheel. Several hundred young girls were seated on the Green with their spinning wheels, all clad in spotless white raiment which formed an artistic contrast to the green of the grass.

One of the most unique and peculiar uses of a New England Green was the holding of religious services as they were called on the Green in Hadley. Instead of service in the Meeting House it was held in the open air in January, 1787, and the sermon was preached by Dr. Lyman of Hatfield, who also exhorted and prayed. The audience consisted of 3,000 soldiers under the command of General Benjamin Lincoln. The army was encamped north of the Meeting House and was sent for the quelling of Daniel Shay's rebellion. The preacher stood behind a pulpit of snow and preached a sermon on a cold January Sabbath with snow piled in drifts, and the roads almost impassable.

The Boston Common was the scene of an unusual event when on the 16th of June, 1775, twelve hundred men with ammunition and provisions for one day assembled there preparatory to their march to Bunker Hill and Breeds Hill under the command of Col. Wm. Prescott. While thus assembled a prayer was offered by President Langdon of Harvard College. In Mrs.

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Earle's book she quotes from Josselyn, who visited Boston in 1663 and says: "On the south there is a small but pleasant Common where the gallants, a little before sunset, walk with their marmalet madams till the nine o'clock bell rings them home to their respective habitations."

The Green was frequently a place for the "standard constitutional," and Edward Everett Hale mentions the fact that George Bancroft, the historian, was in the habit, like many others, of walking around the Boston Common every evening after his day's work was finished. A story is told by Miss Sanborn in reference to Daniel Webster that illustrates a unique use of the Boston Common: "There is a general impression," she says, "that Mr. Webster was a heavy drinker and often under the influence of liquor when he rose to speak; as usual there are two sides to this question. George Ticknor of Boston told my father that he had been with Webster on many public occasions and never saw him overcome but once. That was at the Revere House in Boston where he was expected to speak after dinner. 'I sat next to him,' said Ticknor. 'Suddenly he put his hand on my shoulder and whispered, "Come out and run around the Common." This they did and the speech was a success.'"

The most interesting, impressive and dramatic scene enacted upon the Green or Common is the one de-



SIGN POST AND ELM TREE ON NORTH WESTERN CORNER OF THE  
NORFOLK GREEN



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scribed by Edward Everett Hale at the celebration in Boston of the ending of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. It is a fitting climax to the many general uses to which this Green or Common has been put. The celebration partook of the character of the one at the entrance of the eighteenth century. Chief Justice Samuel Sewell, the man who hanged the witches, and who Edward Everett Hale says, "repented of its so pathetically," records in his diary, under January 1, 1701, the following: "Just about the brake-a-day Jacob Amsden and three other trumpeters gave a blast with the trumpets on the Common. After this a poem was read which was written by Samuel Sewell."

This programme formed the framework for the greater celebration two centuries later and as it is of so great interest in connection with the history of a Green, the writer quotes from Edward Everett Hale's description of it:

"The exercises began at quarter before twelve o'clock Monday night, December 31, 1900, by the blowing of the trumpets from the State House balcony overlooking the Common, followed by a hymn sung by the Assembly, the reading of the Nineteenth Psalm by Edward Everett Hale, and the singing by a chorus of 200 voices of a hymn written two centuries previous by Samuel Sewell. Silence until the stroke

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of the midnight hour and the sound of the trumpets, and then the Lord's Prayer said by all the people, followed by singing of "America." The exercises closed with the sounding of 'taps.' " It is not so much the minor celebrations, or the various common uses of the Green that impress the fact of its usefulness in the life of a community as such great celebrations as occur from time to time during the centuries, of which the one just described is a most forceful illustration. Without the Green how could celebrations of all kinds be properly held, how could traditions and anniversaries be so well commemorated? Surely it is an institution unique in character, broad in usefulness and necessary to every community.



**BUILDINGS ABOUT THE NEW  
ENGLAND VILLAGE GREEN**



## II

### BUILDINGS ABOUT THE NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE GREEN

**I**N carefully studying the New England Village Green there will be found to exist a general plan which has been adopted by nearly all communities since the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock in 1620. There are exceptions, and variations from the original, but as a rule the same plan has been followed in the laying out of every village. The following will be considered in the order in which they are mentioned since this list embraces all the important buildings usually located upon the Green: The Meeting House, the Sabbath Day House, the Tavern, the Town Hall, the Lock-Up, the Court House, the Post Office, all of which are part and parcel of the Village Green; in fact, the Green has been so intimately associated with the Meeting House that in Durham and elsewhere the Green is called the Meeting House Green. In addition there must be considered the various methods of public punishment practised upon the

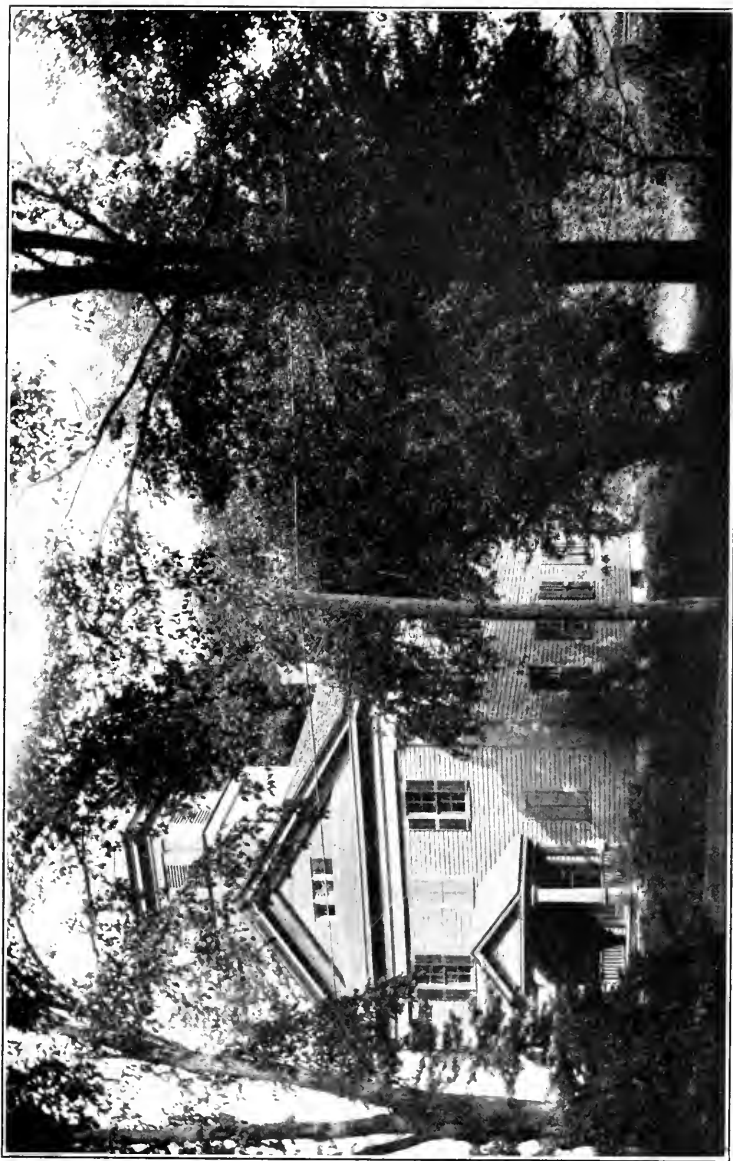
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Green, as well as all the public usages to which it has been put since its origin in New England in the seventeenth century.

The Meeting House with all its details, and the Noon-Day House are the first to be considered from a chronological point of view.

The Meeting House was always the first important structure on any New England Green. In fact the Meeting House was located with a view to having a Green in front of it. The Pilgrim fathers generally attended divine worship in the fort, whither they were accompanied by the men who were heavily armed, until 1648, when they built the first meeting house in Plymouth, Mass. In some New England settlements, however, the Pilgrims worshipped in tents or in private houses. In Boston, the first Meeting House, built in 1640, had mud walls, a dirt floor and a thatched roof. In other words, the first Meeting Houses in the seventeenth century were forts, tents, private houses, or log cabins with thatched roofs.

From these crude structures the Meeting House began to take a different form and shape: instead of the log cabin, a square wooden house was built with a pyramidal roof, and occasionally a belfry. Mrs. Earle refers in her interesting book "Home Life in Colonial Days" to the old church at Hingham, Mass., which is a good example of this style of architecture.



THE NORFOLK TOWN HALL FACING THE GREEN



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

It was built in 1681, and, still standing, is used as a place of worship at the present day.

After the log houses and the square framed church with the belfry in the centre, or the flat roofed church with no tower or belfry, there appeared the church of the present day, with a wooden steeple at one end of the edifice after a design by Sir Christopher Wren.

The term Meeting House was used by the Puritans because the word church was associated in their minds with too much "outward show." They were adverse to display of all kinds in church decoration, as well as to physical comforts and modern convenience. In the course of time this extreme asceticism became to a certain extent obsolete, and the natural sense of beauty found expression, though it has been suggested that the temporary decadence of the New England church was partly due to the absence of symmetry, beauty and æsthetic requirements in the Meeting House.

The design of the New England Meeting House with the Sir Christopher Wren steeple has formed a type which with certain modifications has been copied generally throughout the country. The usual plan of the steeple consists of a square base, which rises high above the main roof ridge, upon which is built an octagonal and narrowing tower, from which rises a steep, tapering spire. The tower stories placed

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

between the square base and the slender spire were treated in manifold ways and were ornamented by cornices, balustrades, pediments, scrolls, according to the taste of the architect. The change to the one story octagonally shaped structure from the square base is hidden by a balustrade. From the summit of this one-story structure the spire ascends in a most graceful and tapering manner.

The steeple of the Meeting House was a watch tower in Revolutionary days. From the steeple of the Old North Church in Boston in 1775, Paul Revere received his signals by lanterns to ride from Charlestown to Concord to warn the people of the approach of the British. It was from the steeple of the Meeting House on Greenfield Hill in Fairfield that Major Talmadge watched the movements of the British ships along the Sound. The Wren steeple in Wethersfield was built in 1761, and is quite similar to the Old South Church in Boston, built in 1729.

In early times the men and women sat on opposite sides of the Meeting House. If there was a gallery, the boys sat on one side and the girls on the other, and over the young people a tithing man watched, to preserve order, and to check any unseemly levity at the start.

The people of the village were summoned to church by the blowing of a horn or a conch shell or a trum-



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

pet, or by the beating of a drum, for which the drummer received twenty shillings a year; or by the firing of a gun, or the ringing of a bell suspended from a tree near the church, or a hand bell carried through streets and along the roads. A flag has been hoisted as a signal of church time, to be lowered as soon as the services began. The church doors were used to post the dates of town meetings and warnings, announcements of auction sales of live stock, and other notices.

In addition to these notices the front doors of the church were places where grotesque decorations were observed. It was a custom when a settler killed a wolf to nail the head to the church, and blood could be seen dripping from the neck. In 1640 it was customary in Salem to pay any one who brought a dead wolf's head to the church, ten shillings, but he must nail it to the Meeting House and give notice to the selectmen. Mrs. Earle mentions one man in 1665 who killed seven wolves, and in 1723 in Ipswich the wolves were so thick in the woods that children were not permitted to go alone, and as late as 1746 wolves were very abundant in the neighboring town of Woodbury.

The Meeting House, besides serving as a place for divine worship, was used for many other purposes. Just before and after the Revolutionary war it was utilized as a magazine for explosives, because there

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

was no fire in it and hence it was safe for the storage of powder. Various places in the Meeting House were set aside as powder rooms. Sometimes the ammunition was kept in the steeple, or on the beams of the roof, or in the stone cellar.

The pews were usually square with high railings, upon the top of which was usually a small balustrade. The seats were fastened to the sides by means of hinges and during the long prayers the occupants of the pews would stand and tilt up the shelf-like seats in order to increase the space. When the pew-holders were ready to sit down the seats were allowed to fall with a tremendous noise. The pulpit was a very high platform, the summit of which was reached by stairs resembling those of a fire escape, but boxed and with doors at the bottom, so that the minister as he climbed them was entirely hidden at the start, and his form did not appear until he reached the top of the pulpit.

The Noon Day or Sabbath House was a low, unpretentious looking building, the prominent feature of which was a large stone chimney in the centre. It was used as a rendezvous for the church members between the morning and afternoon service. Here they could get warm and enjoy lunch, and fill the foot stoves with live coals to be carried into the Meeting House for the next service. In very cold weather some hired man was sent to the Sabbath Day House

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

in advance of the family in order to build a fire and make the Noon Day House warm. If no Noon Day House was built it was because the Meeting House was next to the tavern, where the women enjoyed sitting by the fire and men gathered in the bar room to participate in old New England rum or flip until the time of service arrived.

Later horse sheds were built, but not to any extent until after the Revolutionary war. These sheds did not come into vogue until chaises and wagons were used: not until as late as 1796 was it voted to erect a horse shed in connection with the Meeting House.

The first stove in a New England Meeting House was that in Hadley in 1734. The Old South Church of Boston had a stove in 1783, but these were exceptions to the general rule. As late as 1819 one church in New England refused to pay for a stove, but ordered double doors to keep out the drafts from the galleries. The little foot stoves were used by the women, and, though strange, it is said on good authority that the men would bring their dogs to church and make them lie on their feet to keep them warm during the long service. Sometimes it was so cold that the communion bread was frozen.

Apropos of stoves, it might be mentioned that the Norfolk church installed a stove in 1831, and the neighboring church of Winchester Centre in 1833.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

It is reported that in one case at least, a small stove was set up in the pulpit and the minister would stop a moment during his sermon, replenish the fire with fresh wood, and then proceed.

The village Inn or Tavern or Ordinary stood next in importance to the Meeting House. It was usually situated on the Village Green, and in close proximity to the Meeting House. In fact in very early colonial days the location of the Tavern near the Meeting House was a *sine qua non* of its existence. For example, in the seventeenth century license for the Tavern was granted only on condition that its location should be near the Meeting House: there is recorded the granting of such a license in 1651 on this condition; this curious intimacy of church and tavern is illustrated by the fact that in Little Compton, R. I., a Meeting House, after having been used for years as a place of worship, was transformed into a tavern for the benefit of the public.

It is interesting to inquire into the reason of the establishment of the Meeting House and the Tavern in such close proximity. In the first place, the New England Tavern in the seventeenth century had an altogether different status from that of the eighteenth century. In those early days there was no traveling public. The first post boy to ride between New York and Boston went in 1673, and it was not until the

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advent of the stage coach, at the middle of the eighteenth century, or at the beginning of the nineteenth, that the necessity for a Tavern arose. Traveling for business or pleasure was not customary until then, when the necessity of a place of rest during long journeys was felt. For this purpose the Tavern came to be an essential part of the life of a community.

Previous to the introduction of the stage coach the Tavern or Ordinary existed for different reasons. Its location next to the Meeting House was for the convenience not of travelers, but of the community itself, and in its equipment no provision was made to keep people over night, except perhaps one bedroom, scantily furnished and poorly adapted to the convenience and comfort of a weary traveler. The use of the Tavern in those early days was for drinking the mug of ale or New England rum; for social gatherings; for town meetings; for the dissemination of news; for the comfort of church-goers between services; for public dinners and for political meetings: it was a centre for the exchange of opinions and information upon every conceivable subject.

To the student of early colonial history the reason for the presence and location of the Tavern becomes apparent. In those early days church attendance was compulsory, and heating in the Meeting House was

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prohibited. The service was very long and the church very cold in spite of the little foot stoves. Only in the Tavern could one find food and drink and warmth, and an opportunity to discuss the news of the town. The adjournment of a town meeting to the Inn occurred for the same reason. It is little wonder that later the business of the town was transacted at the Inn instead of at the Meeting House, and that town notices and the names of jurors were posted on the Tavern door. Town meetings were held in winter, and its comfortable fire made the Tavern the favorite place. Usually after the adjournment a good dinner with fine old ale was served at the expense of the town by vote of the selectmen, to be itemized: "For this daies firing and hous room."

It is curious in those early days the Tavern was located by authority next to the church, while in these days in many places no liquor can be sold within so many feet of the church. The habit of drinking in New England was in those early days almost universal, and yet the laws against the abuse of liquor were most stringent. The sale of liquor was under strict regulations; the Tavern was the only place where it could be legally obtained, and a town was obliged to pay a fine if an Inn or an Ordinary was not established for the sale of liquor. This prevented the establishment of saloons, and any abuses arising from

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it were punished most severely. A person who became intoxicated was heavily fined, and was placed in the stocks on the Green, with a card upon which was visible the letter D. The fine was accepted with grace, but the punishment by the stocks and the lettering on the breast was heavy to bear, because it exposed the individual to public ridicule, the form of drastic punishment most dreaded by early settlers.

A notable feature of the Tavern was the sign or name by which it was known to the traveling public. The sign was usually hung upon a post in front of the Tavern, or else fastened to the building itself, or to a tree, as is the case in one of the most famous hostelries of the present day at Goshen, N. Y. It is interesting to trace the origin of the New England Tavern sign, the history of which dates back to very ancient times, for centuries ago the custom of hanging out a sign of the Tavern was in vogue. In fact, the history of sign boards is traceable to ancient Egypt, according to Professor Frothingham, and old England copied the idea from ancient Rome. The Tavern sign became a most important part of the Tavern, as a license to open an Inn originally included the sign upon it. This was the case in England, and France, and other countries, and was mandatory by law in colonial days.

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In pre-Revolutionary times the name and sign of the Tavern had some reference to the mother country, examples of which are found in signs such as King George the Third, or the portrait of General Wolfe, King's Head, The Marquis of Granby, The Green Dragon, and the like. In Revolutionary days signs were adapted to the patriotic temper of the country. Examples are seen in the use of the American Eagle, or the portrait of Washington or Lafayette. In some cases the name of the Inn had reference to some local attraction, or the sign bore a suggestive emblem, such as a bunch of grapes.

During the Revolutionary war the sign post in front of a tavern opposite to the twentieth mile stone out of New York on the Boston Post Road was used to hang a British deserter.

The Tavern keeper, or tapster as he was often called, was a unique character in early colonial history. His status in the seventeenth century was somewhat different from that in the eighteenth century, owing to the metamorphosis which the Tavern underwent through the introduction of the stage coach. There is scarcely an office, religious or political, that the tavern keeper during the eighteenth century has not filled. He was called from all ranks of life. Among the various offices New England tavern keepers have held, the duties of which he performed in



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addition to those of Boniface, may be mentioned choir master, ferry man, tithing man, schoolmaster, justice of the peace, assessor of taxes, town constable, member of the legislature, selectman, captain of the militia, town surveyor, store-keeper, surveyor general of the army, collector of taxes, recruiting officer, apothecary, and church deacon, etc.

At the close of the seventeenth century his social position was not what it was during the latter part of the eighteenth century. Social conditions changed largely with the appearance of the stage coach and the Tavern keeper during this period, until the advent of railroads, held a much higher social position and was considered a man of great influence in the community.

The Tavern keeper was the embodiment of all that makes life joyful. He was usually full of humor, possessed a fund of useful information of a local nature, told a good story, was prominent in the affairs of the town, was a walking encyclopedia on all public and private matters, a generous fellow beloved in the community at large. Indeed, he was *the* prominent man in the village. The social position of the Tavern keeper is illustrated by the fact that the granddaughter of Governor Endicott was the landlady and wife of Mr. Treadwell, who kept the Tavern at Ipswich, Mass. Many are the instances that show what kind

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of men the Tavern keepers in the early days of the Republic were. The following facts are taken from the book entitled "The History of Blandford," by the Rev. S. G. Wood. Justice Ashman kept a Tavern at Blandford, Mass. His son, Eli P. Ashman, helped him until he was nineteen years old. Then he studied law with Judge Sedgwick of Northampton and finally became a lawyer in Blandford. From this country boy developed a great lawyer. He was elected to the State legislature of both houses, was later a United States Senator, and was associated with Harrison Gray Otis. His career did not end here. Eli P. Ashman had two sons, John Hooker, who became in 1829 Royall Prof. of Law in the Dane Law School of Harvard College. The other son, George Ashman, studied law also and was a partner of Chief Justice Chapman of Massachusetts. He was four times elected a member of the legislature and at one time Speaker of the House. He was elected three times to Congress and was Chairman of the Republican Convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln. The college catalogues of early days show that the tavern keeper's sons took precedence of the minister's sons, which again illustrates the prestige which the inn keeper had over those who wore the cloth during the days prior to the Revolutionary war. This slight digression illustrates what kind of a man the early

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Tavern keeper was and gives us abundant proof of his high standing and fine character.

Thus the Tavern and the Tavern keeper grew up with the town and both had a marked influence on its welfare. To be sure, there were evils connected with the Tavern, but the good by far outweighed the evil.

The old-time Tavern was the political wigwam, the news centre upon the arrival of the stage coach, the court house, the banquet hall, the scene of public flogging, the site of executions, the public drinking place open to all except "apprentices, negroes, and Indians." It was the centre of town activity, the alarm station for the minute men during the Revolutionary war.

The elimination of the stage coach and the advent of the railroads again changed the character of the country Tavern. In stage coach days it was to the public what the railroad station is at the present time: it was the place where the passenger booked for his journey, just as the station now is the place where the traveler buys his ticket for the railroad train. This similarity has been emphasized by Mrs. Earle, who compares the distance from one tavern to another as the railroad marks the distance from one station to another in the time table.

In the general plan of a New England Village

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Green the Lock-Up, the county jail and the State prison must be considered in relation to the abandonment of the old instruments of punishment.

The Lock-Up, usually situated on the Green in some room set apart in the Town Hall or other building, was under the local authority of the town constable or selectmen. It was used for detention of persons for any offense prior to their appearance before a local judge or magistrate. The Lock-Up is therefore a substitute for the constable's hand. It is used occasionally to detain tramps, or intoxicated persons over night. The Lock-Up is only for use in emergency, until the culprit can be safely transported to the county jail.

The County Jail is likewise usually situated on the Green in the county seat. It was used for the detention of the prisoner during court action, or for serving short term sentences in cases of misdemeanor, or for civil prisoners or witnesses. The early County Jail, even though located on the Green, has always had a just opprobrium attached to it because it served as a hot bed for the encouragement of crime. The prisoners were huddled together and allowed to mingle in the daytime in the corridors, where the comparatively innocent young man learned about crime from the lips of the hardened criminal. The State prison in Connecticut is located on an extensive Green, while most

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of the county jails adjoin the court house, both of which are situated around the Green or near to it.

During the development and growth of the State from very early colonial days to the present, the question of punishment of delinquents was an important one and it is interesting to trace the various methods of correction upward from colonial days.

In the first few years there were no lock-ups or jails or State prisons to which criminals could be sent. In Clarke's history of Connecticut he says that "In 1667 it was ordered that every county should have a jail." In 1701 it was voted that "four sufficient prison houses should be continually maintained in this colony."

The first jail in Connecticut was at Windham and the first common prison was in the copper mine at Granby, called Newgate, which was in use from 1726 to 1827, at which time the prison was transferred to Wethersfield, where it is now the State prison.

The Newgate prison in Granby was interesting in colonial history, because this first prison in Connecticut was not a separate building, but consisted of a cavernous copper mine. Into this subterranean dungeon the prisoners were thrust, burglars, horse thieves, political offenders, counterfeiters. The many escapes, the incendiarism, the filth and unhygienic conditions made this prison a common pest house, and to prevent

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

escape the culprits while at work were held by chains fastened around the neck and to the ceiling, and by fetters on the ankles. Into the caves the prisoners were thrust at night, the "Caves reeking with filth, water trickling from the roof and oozing from the sides of the cavern." This prison consisted of two stories with two rooms, twelve by twenty-one feet, with one window, and a hole for ventilation over the door. Here, it is said, as many as fifty prisoners slept. In 1821 women were also sent to Newgate, and such a condition of affairs existed until the entire prison was transferred to Wethersfield in 1827.

The ways of punishment for transgressions against the law in very early colonial days were manifold and unique. It is necessary to bear in mind the fact that in every community a jail was not always available. It was necessary, therefore, to have some efficient means of punishment and restraint that could be enforced at once, and that was at the same time applicable in ordinary as well as in extraordinary cases; and it must be remembered that a sense of public ridicule and open derision was greatly dreaded by the Puritans. They were sensitive in the extreme, and resented any kind of punishment, no matter how well deserved, that involved publicity and shame before their fellow townsmen upon a public Green and in front of the Meeting House.

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The first method of punishment that was used was known by the name of bilboes. In Mrs. Earle's book is mentioned the fact that John Winthrop brought bilboes over from England to this country in 1630. They were only used for about a decade, during which time the stocks were introduced, and the bilboes relegated to oblivion. The bilbo consisted of a long iron bar with two iron sliding shackles, into which the ankles of the prisoner were thrust and locked in the same way that handcuffs are locked upon the wrists. A chain was attached to the bar, and then fastened to an upright post. The culprit was obliged to lie flat on his back upon the ground, with his heels suspended in the air, and as he lay there the passing crowd of curious spectators laughed and mocked at him. Among the offenses for which the bilbo was used may be mentioned drunkenness, seditious words, profanity, garrulousness, slander, petty larceny, selling ammunition to the Indians etc.

This instrument was replaced by the stocks in 1639. They consisted of two heavy boards one on top of the other, edgewise, the upper of which could be elevated; and in these two boards were cut two circles, half of each upon the lower board, half upon the upper. The boards were brought into coaptation when the legs of the prisoner had been thrust between. He usually sat on a small bench and was unable to move, so that

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he could not escape the ridicule, the jeers, the laughter and the mockery of the spectators as they passed by on the Sabbath day. The offenses which the stocks were employed to punish were various. Among them may be mentioned drunkenness, extortion, slander, bigamy, petty larceny, reviling the magistrate, absence from the house of God, resisting the town constable, suspected incendiarism, vagrancy and idleness.

The Pillory, often called the stretch-neck, was an instrument of punishment that was a terror to evil-doers. This machine was also transported from England. It consisted of two upright boards connected by a cross piece, which was divided by a hinge, and at the union of the two horizontal pieces a circle or hole was cut. The head was put into this hole, while the two pieces were bent, and then both were straightened to enclose it. If the crime was serious the ears of the prisoner were fastened to the horizontal board by nails on each side of the hole. Mrs. Earle mentions the fact that one man was pilloried because he plowed on Thanksgiving Day; that another was punished in this machine because he cast several votes for himself for a public office; and still another for ordinary speculation, such as buying a cargo before the ship arrived, and then selling it out at retail; others for perjury, petty larceny, witchcraft, counterfeiting, and the passing of counterfeited bills.



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Various methods of enhancing the degradation of the pillory were indulged in by the populace, such as throwing rotten eggs. Sometimes a culprit also received thirty-nine lashes; occasionally one was branded with some letter to signify the crime, thus with the letter A for the adulterer, B for bigamist, C for cheat, D for drunkenness, F for the forger, P for the perjurer, etc. The Pillory fell finally into disuse and was abandoned in 1837.

The Ducking Stool, an engine of punishment in old England, was occasionally used in this country. It consisted of a cross piece of wood attached by a pivot in its centre to a tall upright post, which was fixed in the ground on the bank of a pond or river; and attached to the end of the cross piece overhanging the water was a chair, into which the prisoner was tied. The ducking stool was used almost exclusively for scolding women and brawlers, who were so ducked as to submerge the whole body, including the head, and held under the water for half a minute. It was a form of punishment very much dreaded by women, and seems to have had a most beneficial result in curbing the tongue.

There were other instruments of punishment of like nature for the "unquiet women" to which various names have been applied. It is curious how many methods of punishment were practiced by our colonial

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

forbears to still a woman's tongue. The scold's bridle or the brank was not used in New England, but a cleft stick into which was inserted the woman's tongue was sometimes resorted to in controlling the unruly members among the early settlers on Long Island. History records that in Salem one woman was punished for "reproaching the Elders" by having a cleft stick placed on her tongue for half an hour. These various forms of punishment were always executed on the Green and near the Meeting House.

AROUND THE NORFOLK GREEN



### III

#### AROUND THE NORFOLK GREEN

HAVING considered New England Village Greens in general, let us now consider the Norfolk Green in particular.

To the Rev. Dr. Joseph Eldridge this town is indebted in the year 1870 for the preservation of this beautiful Norfolk Green from desecration by cutting the railroad through its centre, and if this ambassador of Christ had done no other work during his long and faithful ministry in this town, he would have accomplished a work for the community that would have entitled him to the grateful thanks of the past, the present, and the future generations.

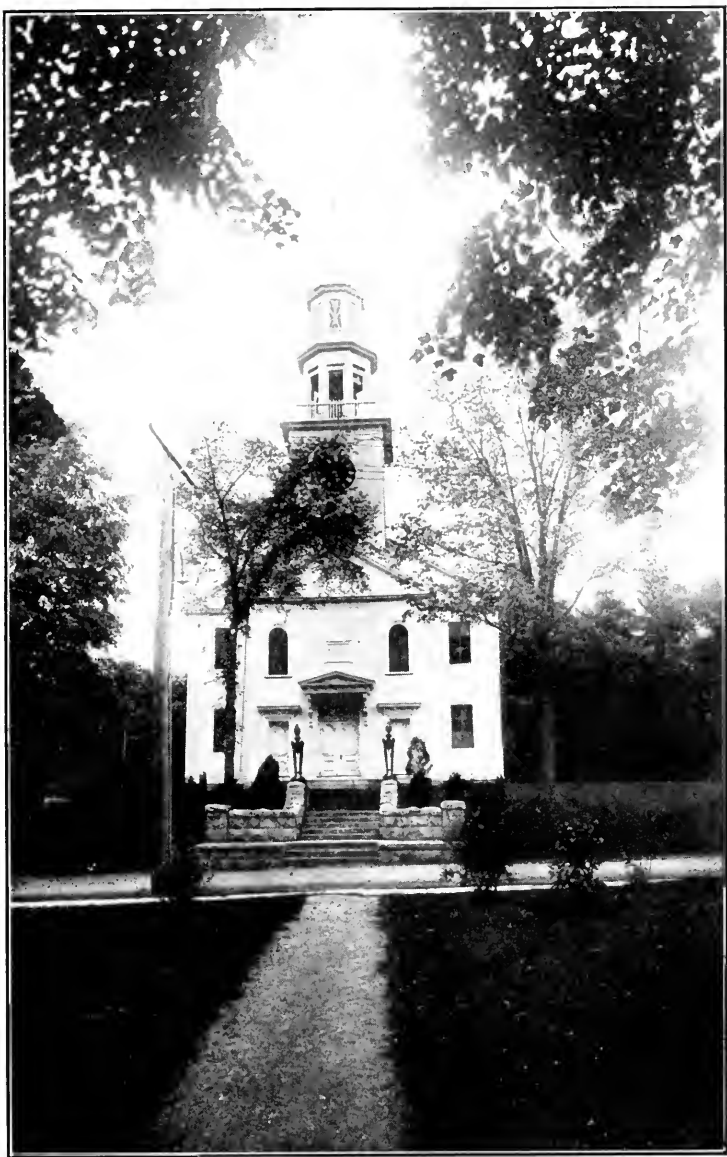
No one can conceive of the importance and value of our Green until he has become imbued with the knowledge of its usefulness and beauty. Few people ever stop to contemplate the beauties of the Norfolk Green. The writer in his pilgrimages throughout New England has observed the Greens, especially in reference to their condition of preservation, and he has

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observed that the care of the Village Green is an index of the prosperity and thrift of the town: when a community begins to deteriorate the Green is the first thing to be neglected.

The Norfolk Green is located in a most convenient and desirable place. The beautiful trees planted by the early settlers afford delightful shade, the winding foot paths possess a peculiar charm. Perhaps the best way to describe it is in imagination to stroll about it, observing the surrounding buildings in the order of location, and then to consider the beauty of the Green itself.

The first building that attracts the eye and the most important structure on the Green is the Meeting House, the history of which is most interesting from every point of view. The first Meeting House on the Green was located very near the situation of the present one. The original House was "raised and covered" in 1759 and was fifty by forty feet in dimensions, of sufficient height to accommodate a gallery, but without a steeple. In 1761, the year of the ordination of the first permanent pastor, Rev. Ammi Ruhamah Robbins, this primitive Meeting House "was underpinned and the lower floor laid." In 1767 the gallery floor was laid and in 1769 the lower part of the building was finished and a pulpit installed, and in 1770 it was dignified and seated. In 1771



THE NORFOLK MEETING HOUSE SITUATED ON THE GREEN





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the galleries were finished, a cushion for the pulpit desk was made, and the entire building painted a peach blossom color. In this building the people worshipped in winter and summer for a little over half a century. They were summoned on the Sabbath by the blowing of a horn and certain persons were appointed to see that every one attended divine worship. Near this peach colored Meeting House, hidden in the trees, was erected the Sabbath Day House, where fires could be made for the members of the church and their friends to warm themselves in the interval between the morning and afternoon services, and also to fill the tin foot stoves with live coals, which they carried into the Meeting House to warm their feet.

In 1813 this first Meeting House was removed, and in 1814 the second Meeting House was finished, 60 by 45 feet in dimensions, and with a steeple and bell. This was built near the site of the original and was erected under the supervision of Michael F. Mills, who was appointed as agent by the society to build the best house he could for \$6,000. It is still in existence; but after the death of Rev. Joseph Eldridge the interior was beautifully decorated and painted, a new platform and pulpit erected, electric lights installed, a new organ donated, Munich stained glass windows placed behind the pulpit, all through the great generosity of the Eldridge and Battell families.

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The Meeting House as it now stands is a model of colonial church architecture. Its symmetry, its proportions, its graceful steeple, its artistic Sir Christopher Wren spire, its site on the knoll overlooking the Green, its beautiful interior decoration, its magnificent organ, make it one of the most attractive and beautiful in New England. One feature is most unusual to find in a Congregational church, a cross at the apex of the spire. It is "the only Puritan Meeting House whose spire from the first was surmounted by a cross and the same cross still points skyward." This cross was evidently placed on the steeple in 1914,<sup>1814</sup> according to dates found in Rev. Thomas Robbins's diary.

Before dismissing this beautiful New England Meeting House, it may not be inappropriate to mention two events that occurred at the time of its completion. These events are mentioned in Crissey's valuable book on the history of Norfolk. The training band met one day on the Green in front of the church, and while drilling with the militia, heard the sound of a violin, but were unable to tell whence the music came. Some one, looking up, discovered Barzillai Treat on the apex of the steeple, sitting astride the new vane, playing his violin, to the astonishment and amazement of all below. On another occasion three or four little girls climbed into the belfry, and

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

were observed outside the railing chasing one another in a game of "catcher." Men on the Green, realizing the danger, hastily climbed to the belfry tower and seized each child as she came around the belfry tower.

Still another story connected with the first Meeting House is interesting. On Thanksgiving Day, 1787, the people had assembled for divine worship and the minister had begun his Thanksgiving sermon when a man entered the church and walked down the middle aisle and facing the minister, informed him and the congregation that five wolves were on Haystack Mountain, already partly surrounded by men, and that assistance was immediately needed to hunt them down before they made their escape. A number of men arose from their seats, marched down the aisle, collected on the Green in front of the church and securing their guns, started for the scene of action. A line of hunters was formed around Haystack, who gradually ascended in order to hem the wolves in near the mountain top. The beasts now made a stampede and were one by one killed, and all were brought to the Village Green and exhibited to the people who had collected after the services to witness the result of the hunt.

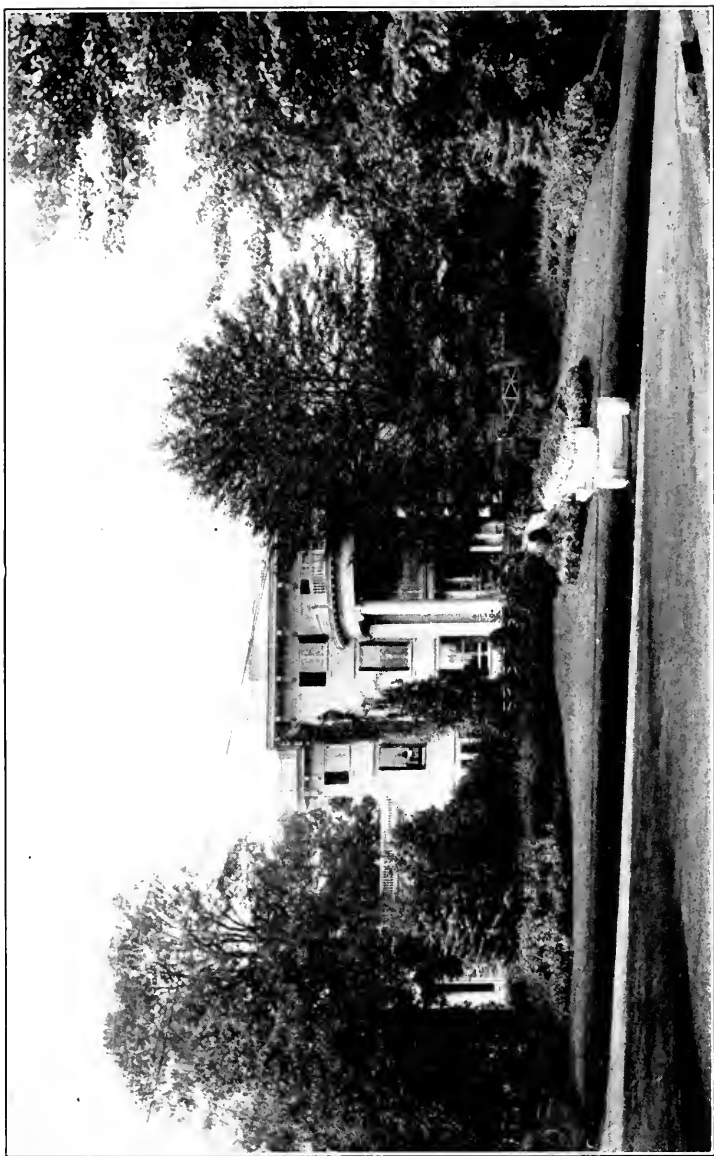
The next building to the church is the beautiful colonial residence of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel, called the White House, which was originally built

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

by Mr. Joseph Battell in 1799 for the reception of his bride, the daughter of Rev. Ammi Ruhamah Robbins. In this house was born on April 9, 1819, Robbins Battell, who died in this same house on the Green on January 26, 1895. He was most intimately associated with the growth and development and preservation of this beautiful Village Green and he is recognized as the father of modern Norfolk. In this house is a picture gallery containing a rich collection of paintings, chiefly by American artists, among them "The Last Moments of John Brown," by Thomas Hovendon; some paintings by Church, Bierstadt and many other artists of great reputation. While this gallery is not a public one, visitors are privileged to see these paintings by special permission. In addition to the picture gallery this house contains a magnificent organ.

In the belfry of the Meeting House adjoining the White House is a bell presented by Mr. Robbins Battell, "which rings blessed requiems to his memory in music of his composition."

The Tavern on the Green was built by Giles Pettibone, Jr., in 1794. He died in 1811. His son Jonathan Humphrey Pettibone, who died in 1832, succeeded his father as Tavern keeper. This Tavern a little later was kept by John A. Shepard, the son of Major James Shepard, who kept a Tavern in 1820



"THE WHITE HOUSE." RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. CARL STOECKEL



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

in the house built by Captain Ariel Lawrence opposite the residence of Dr. Wm. W. Welch, and later in the Canfield house just below the present Catholic church. John A. Shepard was born in 1802 and died in 1883. This Tavern was known as Shepard's Tavern and during the stage coach era was a place of great activity. Here the stages stopped to change horses en route between Hartford and Albany and between Winsted and Canaan.

This Tavern was in late years rebuilt for a private residence by Mr. Frederick M. Shepard, the son of Capt. John A. Shepard, and was occupied by him and his family as a summer residence. It is now occupied by his daughter, Miss Edith Shepard, who, in 1914, constructed a most beautiful Italian garden on the land adjoining the house; and this garden forms a most attractive feature in connection with the Green. An interesting fact connected with the old Tavern is that seven generations of the Shepard family have lived in it. The baby representing the seventh generation was born in old England and was brought over to New England to complete the scripture number.

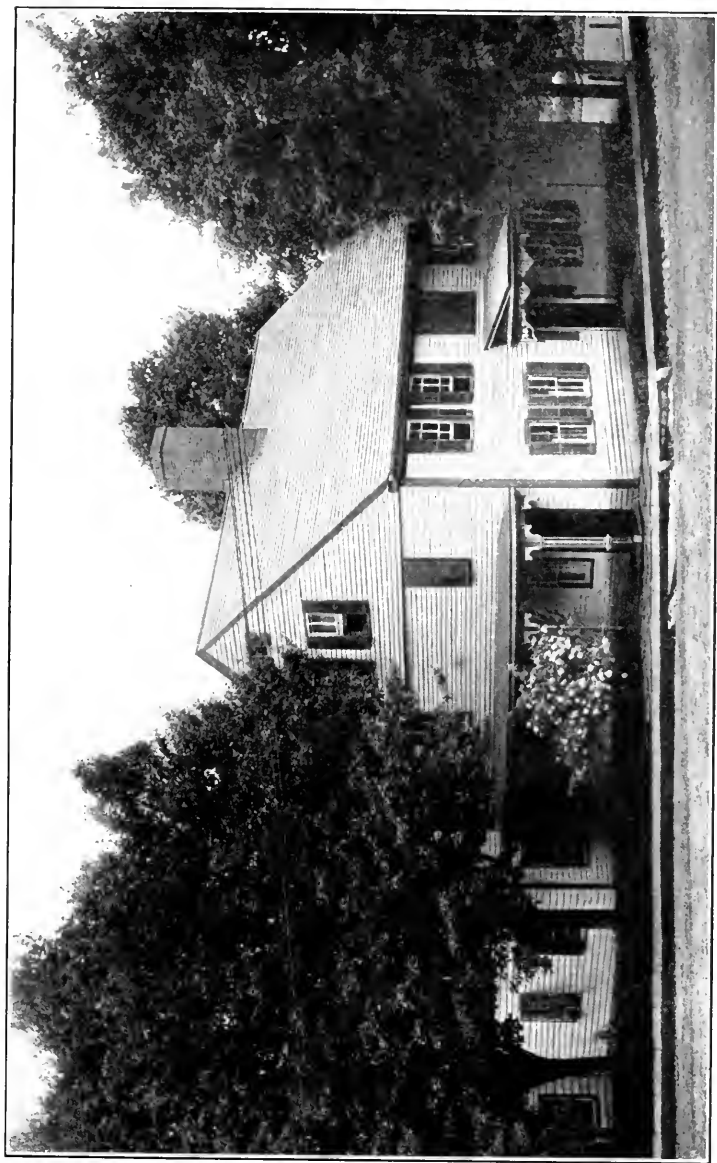
One of the most attractive buildings upon the Green is the Library. At the tenth anniversary of the opening of this Library, Henry H. Eddy, the librarian, found that the first mention of a town

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

library was in 1761, the year of the inauguration of the Rev. Ammi Ruhumah Robbins as first permanent pastor of the church in Norfolk. A library company was then formed, and about 150 volumes were collected; and this library remained in activity about thirty-five years, when it was dissolved, the books to be distributed among the original donors. In 1824 a second library was formed and incorporated with 142 volumes, besides periodicals. Like its predecessor it was short lived and dissolved in 1866. The books passed into the hands of Mrs. Charlotte Mills, and Miss Louise Stevens, who subsequently founded a third library, which was in the hands of a committee. This new Library was placed on a business basis and a yearly fee of one dollar was charged for membership. It continued for a year and its books formed the nucleus of a fourth Library. In 1881 Miss Isabella Eldridge opened a reading room in the Scoville house on the Green, and the books of the third Library were placed there, and in addition 28 newspapers and periodicals.

In 1889 the present Library, the gift of Miss Isabella Eldridge, in sacred memory of her father and mother, was opened to the public. In 1899 it was incorporated, and subsequently the building was enlarged. It contains forty thousand volumes and about seventy newspapers and periodicals. Its permanent





THE SHEPARD TAVERN, BUILT IN 1794



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

usefulness is illustrated by the fact that in 1915 there were over 30,000 books in circulation and 55,000 visitors in the building. Its administration is perfect in all its many details. Dr. John Shaw Billings, the late librarian of the public library in New York City, who was the greatest authority on library management, spoke in the highest terms of its efficiency and management. Mr. Frederick M. Shepard, whose great generosity to Norfolk in many ways is well known, contributed land to enlarge and to make it beautiful. The floral decorations are the gift of Miss Eldridge, and to her the town people are indebted for the attractive appearance of the flowers, the hedges, the lawn, and the shrubbery surrounding this artistic building, which adds so much to the appearance of the village. This library is one of the many noble and generous gifts of this kind-hearted and philanthropic woman, who has done so much for her native town and has so largely contributed to the scenic beauty of the Green.

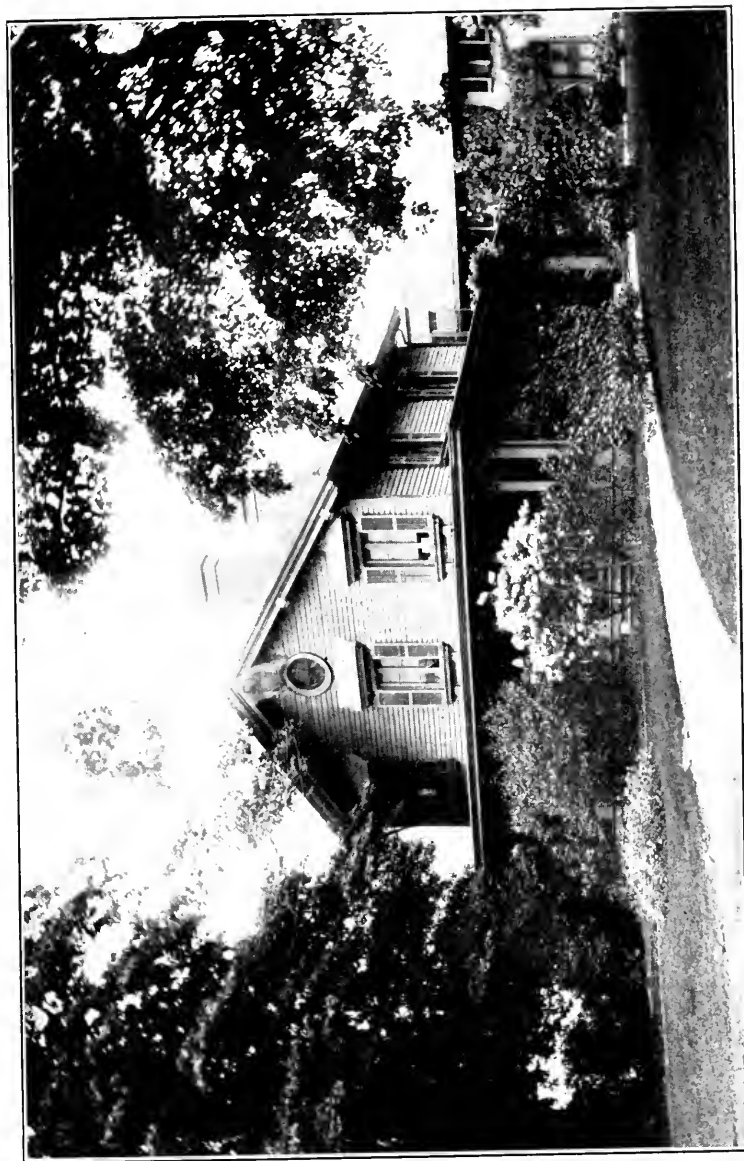
The Parsonage was built originally by Mr. E. H. Dennison as a residence, and the house in which Mr. George W. Scoville lives next to it was formerly Mr. Dennison's store. The Dennison house was purchased by Mr. Alfred L. Dennis and was enlarged and improved in 1852. This house became his summer residence and he was the first summer resident

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

of Norfolk. It was once occupied by Mr. Robbins Battell at the time of his marriage, and is the house in which Mrs. Carl Stoeckel was born. After the death of Mr. Joseph Battell, Mr. Robbins Battell moved into the White House. During the time of Mr. Dennis's occupancy his daughter, Mary Eliza Dennis, also Warren E. Dennis, were born. Later the house was presented by Mr. A. L. Dennis to his sister, Mrs. Samuel Shepard, and afterward sold by her to Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel, who for many years owned it. Recently it was sold to the Rev. Wm. F. Stearns, who has concreted the outside, and at present resides in it.

The Town Hall, originally the academy, was built in 1840 and from that time on was used as the place for the transactions of town business, including voting. In 1846 a committee was appointed to confer with the proprietors of the academy with a view to the use of this building for town meetings. The lower floor is used for town meetings; the upper floor is the property of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel; it was not unusual in early days to have one building owned by two or more parties. In addition to the school room above and the town hall below, there was constructed in the basement a lock-up, which has been built on the first floor by partitioning off a room.

The next house on the Village Green is that owned



RESIDENCE OF REV. WM. F. STEARNS, FORMERLY OWNED BY MR. A. L. DENNIS, AND LATER BY MR.  
AND MRS. CARL STOECKEL



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

by Mr. Ralph I. Crissey. He still resides in this attractive house, with beautiful elm trees and green lawn in front. It is the home of one of Norfolk's most respected and beloved citizens, whose brother was the author of a most complete and valuable history of the town of Norfolk.

One of the most beautiful of the colonial residences in front of the Green is the one which is now occupied by the Misses Eldridge and which is their ancestral home, having been the residence of the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Eldridge. This house has been enlarged and beautifully decorated by the well-known New York architect, Mr. J. Cleveland Cady, and is one of the most artistic homes in New England. The arrangement of the flowers, and the beautiful garden and green houses around the house conspire to make the place one of the most attractive in Connecticut. The valuable collection of flowers in the early Spring in front of this house affords an opportunity of seeing and admiring the choicest and most beautiful collection of foreign plants in any village in New England.

The stone chapel on the Green which adjoins the Meeting House is the gift of Mrs. Urania Battell Humphrey, supplemented by the gifts of her son-in-law, Professor Shepard, and Mr. Robbins and Miss Anna Battell. This beautiful building is made of

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

granite quarried from Bald Mountain, and stands on the site of the old centre school house and Conference Room, which was erected in 1819. There is this inscription on the chapel:

“To the Triune God in memory of  
Joseph Battell and Sarah Battell.”

This building was erected in 1887 and was designed by Mr. J. Cleveland Cady of New York. Mrs. Humphrey died before it was completed and it was given over to the First Ecclesiastical Society of the Town of Norfolk. The chapel was first used in 1888 for the weekly paryer meeting and Sunday school, and has been in use since that time and is still used for religious services. The memorial windows were designed by Mr. Louis C. Tiffany.

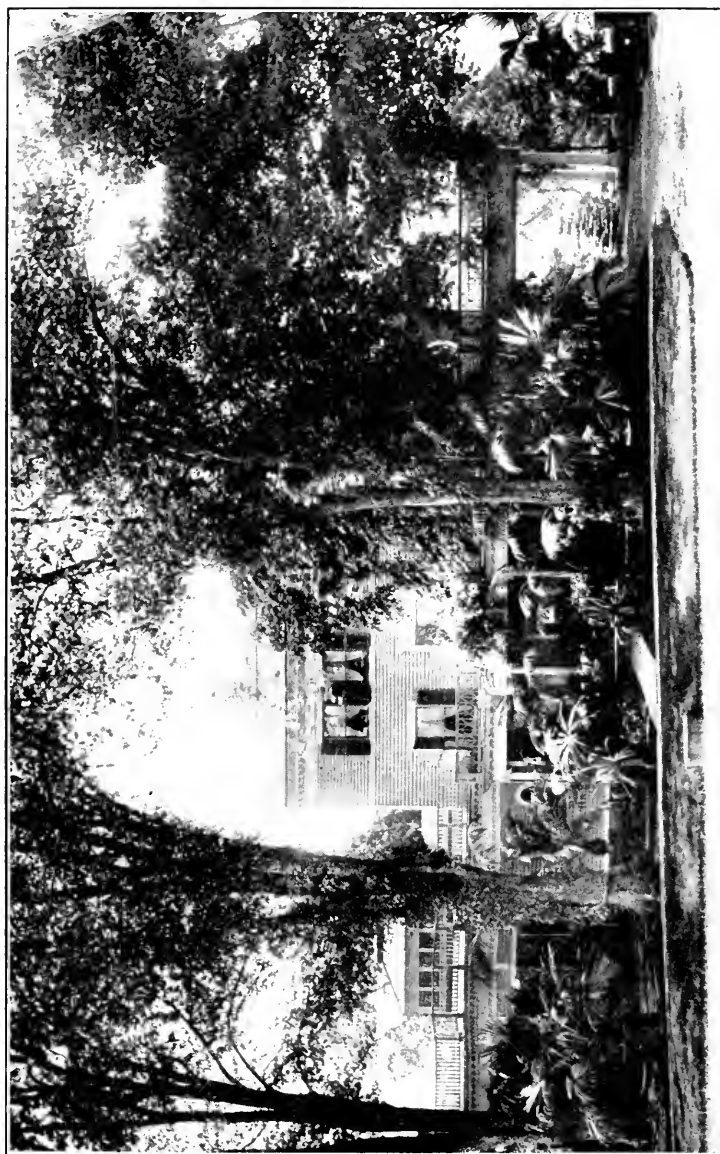
Having strolled in imagination around the Green and observed the colonial residences and public buildings, a walk on the Green itself will be found full of interest. The first thing to attract the eye are the beautiful trees. The elms on the Norfolk Green were set out in 1788, as were some button woods and other indigenous trees. An inscription on one of the elms still standing reads:

### “VOICES OF THE ELMS

“Cæsar saw fifty: we an hundred years.

Still green, an hundred more we'll stand, seers,





RESIDENCE OF MISS MARY AND MISS ISABELLA ELDRIDGE



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

And watch the generations as they go,  
Beneath our branches in their ceaseless flow."

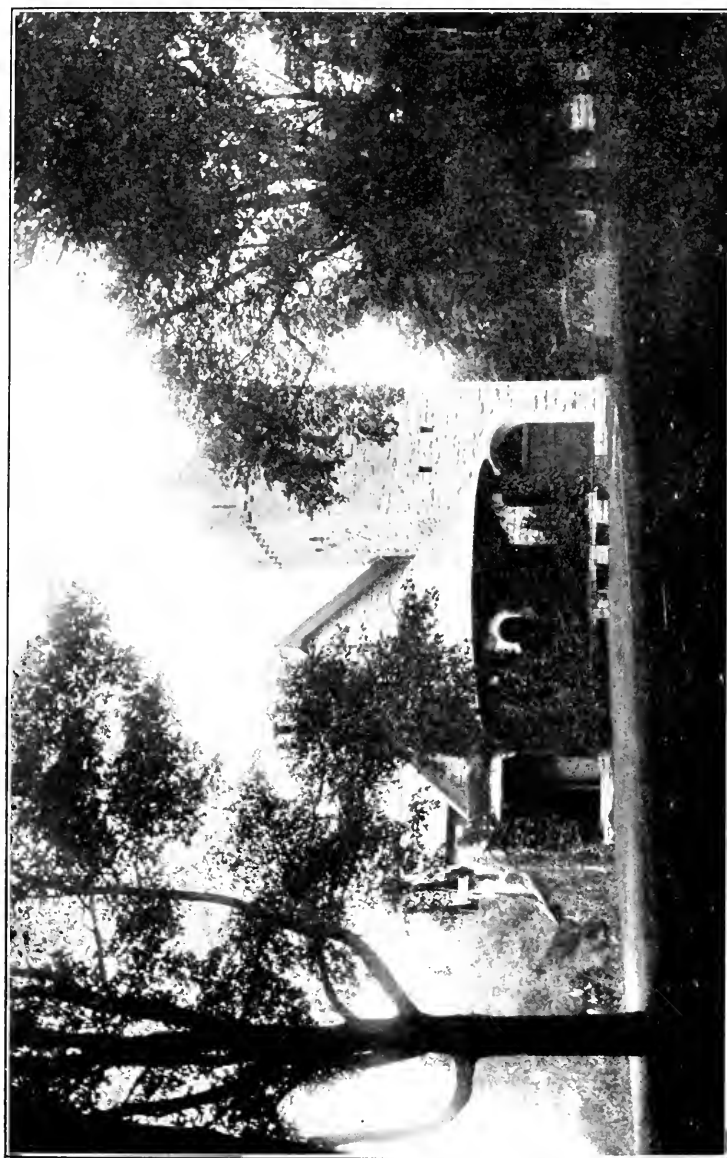
These magnificent elms are silent and impressive witnesses of scenes and events that have been enacted for over a century on the Norfolk Green. The beautiful inscription was furnished by the Rev. John F. Gleason about 1880, who at that time was the minister of this time-honored Meeting House.

The primeval forest which once covered the Green was probably removed about 1775. Dr. Thomas Robbins in his century sermon says: "The shade trees on this Green were set out in the Spring of 1788." The number of trees set out at that time is said to be fifty-seven, and of this original number only seven of the elms are still standing. Mr. Rice, the beloved teacher who came to Norfolk in 1846 and retired in 1858, planted trees on the green, selecting specimens of every kind indigenous to Norfolk. Mr. H. W. Carter introduced systematic tree planting on the Green, and to him is due the credit of having stimulated the interest of the town in the subject. Arbor Day always is celebrated on the Norfolk Green, the Misses Eldridge present trees to the children of the village to plant. This is one of the many generous acts on the part of these sisters in contribution to the beauty of this unique village and Green.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

The Constitutional Oak presented to the town by Delegate William O'Connor was planted on the Green May 2, 1902. The government of the United States, through Senator Joseph R. Hawley, sent a Constitution Oak to each town through its delegate. The occasion of the presentation of the oak was in commemoration of the constitutional convention held in 1902 in Connecticut. The oak died and the voters of Connecticut rejected the constitution adopted by the convention.

Another object of great interest is the Soldiers' Monument. This was erected a few years after the close of the Civil War, on the centre of the green, in front of the Meeting House, in memory of those who went from Norfolk to the war. The town voted \$750 toward the expense of the monument, the balance was raised by private subscription to the amount of \$2,200. Wm. A. Burdick designed it and it was built from the celebrated granite of Westerly, Rhode Island. This monument consists of two bases, a die, a plinth and a granite shaft. The measurements taken from Crissey's book are: the lower base, six feet square; the second base, four and a half feet square, and the die, from which rises the shaft, three feet nine inches square and three and a half feet high; so that the entire height is a little more than 24 feet. On the west face is inscribed: "To the memory of the soldiers



THE STONE CHAPEL ON THE GREEN



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

from this town who gave their lives to their country in the war of the Rebellion." The names of the thirty-five men are carved upon it. The monument is simple, effective, grand: in its silent massiveness it shall tell the story to posterity of the steadfastness, even unto death, of those whose glorious deeds it commemorates, and whose memory it preserves."

At the apex of the triangle of the Green and at its extreme southern end, is the beautiful memorial fountain erected in 1889 by Miss Mary Eldridge in memory of Mr. Joseph Battell. This fountain is made of carved granite from Milford, Mass., with lamps of bronze, and a bronze fish out of the mouth of which flows a stream of water into a stone reservoir. Out of this horses can drink, and in a smaller bowl below dogs can quench their thirst. The fountain stands on a paved platform made of pebbles embedded in cement. There is an upright stone column in the centre upon which is this inscription:

"In Memory of Joseph Battell, born in Norfolk, 1806, died in New York, 1874." Upon the other side of the column is engraved in small type the following: "Erected by his niece, Mary Eldridge." Above the bowl is the date:

"Erected MDCCCLXXXIX"

This memorial fountain, much admired as a work

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

of art, was made from designs by Stanford White of New York. The column and the ball are of Greek design, copied after an old Spanish fountain.

Few who have not seen the Norfolk Green in the four seasons can realize the great contrast which it presents at different times. The beautiful green grass and the lovely flowers of summer are replaced by a sheet of snow in winter: upon one occasion, many years ago, it is reported, the snow lay to the depth of six feet on the level, and from eighteen to twenty in the drifts. Upon this Norfolk Green a group of four young people once indulged in an innocent dance on a week day, when the deacon, now long gone to his rest, warned the young people that if a repetition occurred, they would be read out of church. It is hard to believe that the Calvinistic tendency was ever so strong as to provoke such a threat made in good faith.

The Norfolk Green was the place selected as the starting point for the erection of milestones indicating the distance along the main highway from the village centre. To Mr. Robbins Battell is due the credit of placing mile stones out from the Village Green for one and two measured miles along every public highway radiating from it. These stones so set up still stand to indicate to the traveller his distance from the Norfolk Green.



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

The placing of milestones along highways dates back as far as 1774, and to Benjamin Franklin while postmaster general is due in great part the credit of establishing this method of measuring the road distance from town to town. Benjamin Franklin measured out the miles by some instrument on the cart and wagon wheel, and Jenkins mentions in his book on the Boston Post Road the fact that these milestones, some of which are still in evidence, marked the location of taverns along the post roads. There is one at Stratford, another at Roxbury, which were set up in the eighteenth century.

These milestones were of great importance in those early days, in proof of which may be cited the act of 1774, whereby the penalty of defacing one of them was a fine of three pounds sterling; or if the offender were a slave, he was committed to jail and received thirty-nine lashes on his bare back, "unless the said forfeiture of three pounds were paid within sixty days after such conviction."



**EVENTS THAT OCCURRED ON THE  
NORFOLK GREEN**



#### IV

### EVENTS THAT OCCURRED ON THE NORFOLK GREEN

**I**T IS interesting to note that the first American flag was made by Betsy Ross of Philadelphia in May, 1776, "with its thirteen stripes and a blue field dotted with thirteen stars." It is said that General Washington on Christmas Eve, 1776, carried the flag across the Delaware River through the ice and over the snow in his attack upon the Hessians at the battle of Trenton. The first public mention of the American flag by the British was at the surrender of General Burgoyne, October 17, 1777, when one of his officers said, "The stars of the new flag represent the constellation of States." In association with this episode about the flag with General Burgoyne has been handed down the story that a part of Burgoyne's army encamped on the Norfolk Green during their retreat from Ticonderoga to Boston while he and a part of his army were prisoners of war.

From the Norfolk Village Green upon which the

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

militia and training band drilled twenty-four Norfolk men responded at a moment's notice and thus contributed to the army of the minute men to the call of the "Lexington alarm" in 1775, and during the Revolutionary war more than one hundred and fifty Norfolk men gave their services, and many their lives, to the cause of liberty. This same Village Green witnessed the departure of one hundred and fifty more men who enlisted to fight in the Civil War in 1861. The sacred precinct of this Village Green has borne a great testimony to the valor and courage and patriotism of Norfolk men, and if it had no other association connected with it than this, it is entitled to the protection, care and love of the community. It is safe to state that the Norfolk Green has a history that insures it a place as great in the hearts of the American people as any Green in New England. Many of the following facts have been taken from the diary of Mrs. John A. Shepard, who kept a diary for over fifty years. This privilege has been granted by Miss Edith Shepard.

On February 18, 1851, the village boys played a game of batton on the Green; and later, the writer remembers distinctly seeing the English game of wicket played on its southern extremity near where the memorial fountain now stands.

On May 23, 1853, men planted trees around the

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Green to supplant some which had died through the inclemency of the weather.

On January 12, 1854, the Indians gave an exhibition around and on the Green and in May of the same year a public auction or vendue took place there. In November of the same year, by a singular freak of nature, many of the trees were seen in blossom, and a repetition of this phenomenon occurred in January, 1858.

On March 13, 1856, the stage was delayed by the wind which completely upset it as it was approaching the Green. This happened while the stage was "rounding the cape" near the old Green situated opposite the Bigelow tavern now occupied as a summer residence by Mr. Louis Stearns of New York.

On January 30, 1857, the thermometer on the Green stood 30° F. below zero and no stage with the mail came down the hill to change horses for a period of one week.

On August 17, 1858, there was a grand celebration on the Village Green upon the occasion of the completion of the laying of the Atlantic cable between England and America, and the transmission of a message from Queen Victoria to President Buchanan. The writer remembers the event very distinctly: the occasion of the celebration was impressed upon him by his father as a wonderful event he must never for-

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

get, and the scene is as vivid upon him as if it were yesterday. This celebration consisted of a display of fireworks, the ringing of the church bells, the firing of guns, and a procession with illuminated transparencies with many mottoes appropriate to the occasion. On one transparency was emblazoned the words, "Norfolk and London united." On the day following this celebration the Winsted band came up to Norfolk and played on the Green and the houses all around the Green were illuminated by candles standing in every window. A torch light procession marched around the Green and speeches were made appropriate to the occasion. On Aug. 28, 1858, there was a ball match played on the Green—a part of this great celebration which covered several days. On September 10 of this same year another ball game was played between the Colebrook and Norfolk boys after which a supper was provided at the Shepard Tavern for the thirty-two players.

On April 11, 1859, the market fair was held on the Norfolk Green—the forerunner of the present Agricultural fair now held on the private grounds of the Association.

On September 5, 1859, there were four stages to Winsted from Norfolk and the changing of the horses took place on the Green in front of the tavern.

On April 8, 1870, the Norfolk Green was covered



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

with ice and snow and the children were out sliding on their sleds; and on September 14 of the same year the Sabbath School held its picnic on the Green.

On November 1, 1870, the Rev. Joseph Eldridge preached his farewell sermon in the church facing the Green and upon this occasion two carloads of people came from Winsted to pay homage to this saintly man, to listen to his sermon, and to participate in the solemn exercises.

On September 12, 1871, a great celebration was held on the Green on the occasion of the completion of the railroad through Norfolk. A cavalcade marched to the Green headed by the Lakeville cornet band amid firing of cannons, ringing of church bell, the prolonged whistle of the locomotive and the shouting of the people. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. Eldridge and an address was made by Mr. John K. Shepard, after which a bountiful collation was served. The press was represented by Mr. Charles Hopkins Clark of the Hartford Courant and many other Connecticut men of celebrity made addresses from the platform which was erected on the Green for this purpose. The fact that the Green was not sacrificed to the railroad, which through the influence of Rev. Dr. Eldridge and Mr. Robbins Battell was compelled to go around the park instead of across it, added much to the sincerity of the festivities which

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

the people of Norfolk were assembled to celebrate. On September 16, 1874, the Sabbath School Convention of Teachers was held on the Green.

On May 30, 1877, the people assembled on the Green to hear an address by the Rev. Mr. Gleason, and upon its completion one hundred children sang, and then marched from the Green with flags and bouquets to visit the cemetery and to decorate the graves of the soldiers who had fallen in defense of their country during the Civil War. In this same year seats were placed on the Green by Mr. Ford.

In December, 1878, the old bell in the belfry of the church on the Green was taken down and a new bell weighing two thousand pounds was placed in the belfry; and two days later new chimes presented by Mr. Robbins Battell were attached to this bell. The words to the music of the chimes are, during the day:

“Lord through the day  
Be Thou our guide  
So by Thy power  
No foot shall slide.”

During the night:

“Lord through the night  
Protect us still  
By Thy great might  
From every ill.”

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

On August 22, 1880, a church service was held on the Green and the Rev. Mr. Gregory of Hartford, Conn., preached. Services of a like nature have been conducted by the Rev. Wm. F. Stearns at intervals during the past few years on the Green in front of the church during the summer evenings.

On April 28, 1881, John A. Shepard, who kept the tavern on the Green, set out ten beautiful maples in front of the tavern and along the path in front of the library where they now afford abundant shade to pedestrians as they walk on the north side of the Green. The trees have grown to a large size and reflect the generous forethought of the man who planted them for others to enjoy just one year previous to his death. On June 21, 1881, the Sabbath School Convention was held on the Green upon which occasion a bountiful collation was served, and in August of the same year a brass band from Falls Village gave a concert for the enjoyment and pleasure of the people of the town.

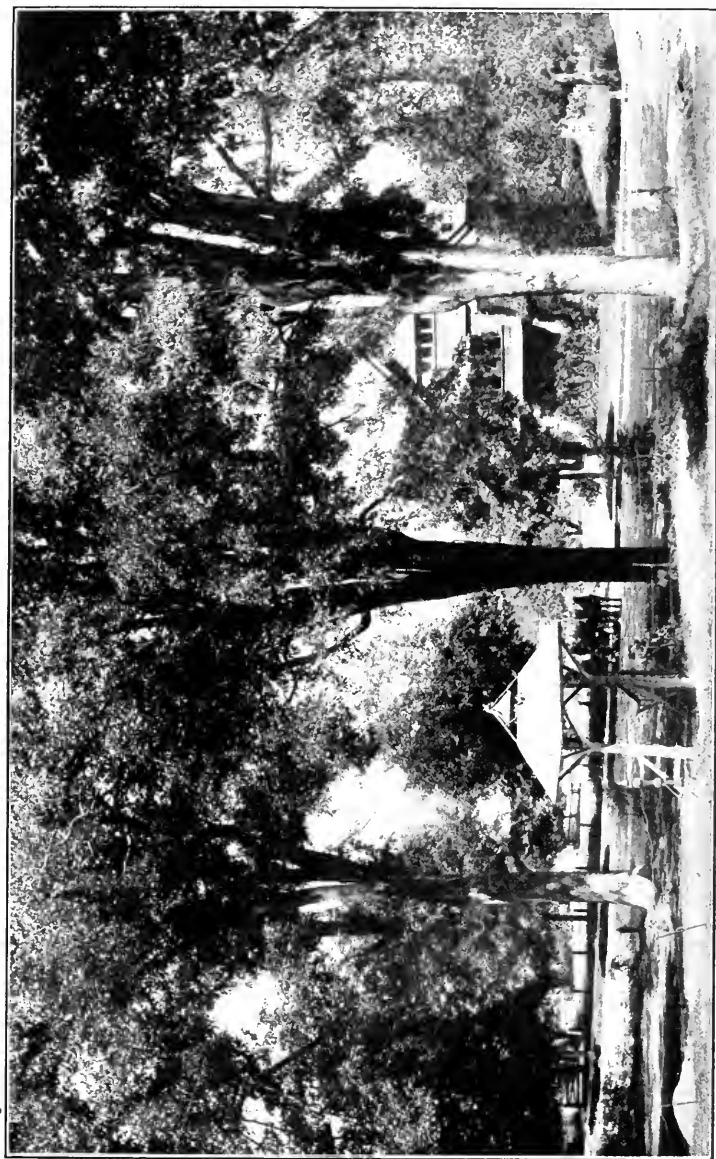
In July, 1882, a festival was held on the Green and the grounds were all illuminated by Chinese lanterns. The following month there was a series of six concerts held on the Green through the benefaction of Mr. Robbins Battell. The band was brought from New York and it played during the afternoons and evenings. During this same month a concert was

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

also given by the Winsted band, and a festival was given by the ladies of the village at which quite a sum of money was raised for benevolent purposes. Another series of concerts was given on the Green in July, 1888, by Mr. Battell. To one of the concerts a special train of five cars brought about two thousand visitors from New Hartford and Winsted and to another in this series a special train of seven cars brought people from Collinsville, New Hartford and Winsted—a fact mentioned to illustrate the interest of the neighboring people in good music.

In 1907 there was a fire drill on the Green under the auspices of Fire Chief Croker and Dr. H. M. Archer of the Fire Department of New York City. To the assembled audience an exhibition was given to demonstrate the usefulness and high pressure of the great water system by throwing a stream of water over the church steeple. The water is brought to the Green and to the town through the generosity of Mr. Frederick M. Shepard who incorporated in 1893 a company to carry the water from Lake Wangum on Canaan Mt., a distance of four miles, by a twelve and ten-inch main through the granite ledge of rocks,—a magnificent work, completed in 1896, and an enduring monument to his native town.

In addition to the hose drill there was an exhibition of life saving where men were carried from the roof



VIEW OF THE NORFOLK GREEN AND THE LIBRARY



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

of the Meeting House to the ground. This exhibition on the Green was an inspiration to the men of the Norfolk Fire Department, and it was an unusual privilege to receive instructions from men whose reputation as fire fighters is world wide. It led to the formation of a chemical fire company as part of the fire department. The company has, through subscriptions raised by Mrs. Frederic S. Dennis, received a chemical engine and an automobile, and with its other equipments is fully prepared.

On July 4, 1916, the Norfolk Green was the meeting place of the town people in general to inaugurate the first community day. The occasion was an inspiration of the Rev. Mr. Barstow and to him is due the credit of bringing together the people of all denominations to celebrate in common the anniversary of our National Independence. All the people thus assembled on the Green were transported in automobiles kindly furnished in great numbers and free of charge. The people were then carried to the golf links where a grand celebration took place in which all persons of whatever creed and nationality, young and old, came together. On account of this manner of celebrating, the Fourth of July was called "get together day." All kinds of athletic games suited to respective ages were enjoyed; notably a baseball match between local teams was arranged in which game Mr.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

George B. Case, a former captain of the Yale University nine, and one of the most famous baseball players in the country, and now one of the most distinguished lawyers of the United States, acted as umpire. The captain of one of the local teams was young George Case, who bids fair to eclipse his father in athletic sports. There were other athletic games, drills by the boy scouts, literary exercises and a beautiful lunch provided by the ladies of the village for one thousand people. Music was kindly provided by Miss Mary Eldridge and the occasion was in every way enjoyed by all. During the summer of 1916 the Village Green was used as the meeting place for the Norfolk Guards where, like the militia of colonial days, the young men were drilled in military tactics; which demonstrates that Norfolk is not behind other towns in the spirit of preparedness of the present day.



**INCIDENTS AND ACTIVITIES  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
NORFOLK GREEN**



## V

### INCIDENTS AND ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE NORFOLK GREEN

**H**AVING now reviewed in a chronological order some of the events which occurred on the Green it is pertinent to refer to some miscellaneous subjects connected with the history of the Green which can not be classified with the events already mentioned.

The first Post Office in Norfolk was established in 1804, and Michael F. Mills was the first postmaster. The office was in the Ariel Lawrence Tavern near the site of the memorial fountain dedicated to Dr. William W. Welch; the small drawer of a table was all that was necessary in those days. Joseph Jones was appointed postmaster about 1815, and the Post Office then was upon the Green in the house next to the present parsonage. The Post Office was also kept in the Shepard Tavern. The office was moved down the hill and up again several times, and about 1852 was in the Battell store. In 1861 it was moved again

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

onto the Green to the old store, where it remained for about eight years. It is now in the Arcanum building near the Savings Bank.

The nearest Post Office for Norfolk until 1793 was in Hartford, Conn., and the first post rider came through Norfolk in 1789 en route for Lenox from New Haven. This post rider, Jehiel Saxton by name, travelled through the village at stated intervals. Incidentally it might be mentioned that a post rider went from Litchfield to New York in 1790. In 1794 Ebenezer Burr of Norfolk became a post rider between Litchfield and Salisbury, via Goshen, Norfolk and Canaan. In connection with the subject of mail and post riders might be mentioned the facts that in the year 1673 the first mail on the continent of America was dispatched from New York to Boston; that about 1772 the first stage coach line was established between these two cities, one coach every two weeks; that in 1782 the service was daily; that about 1848 the railroads began to run through trains between Boston and New York. From this date the doom of the post rider and the stage coach was sealed and upon the introduction of the railroads the tavern or inn became the hotel.

The writer recalls most vividly before the days of the railroad, the arrival on the Green of the stage coach from Winsted to Canaan, and vice versa. The

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

old Huggins stage could be heard rumbling down the hill over the rough country road, the brake grinding until released at the foot of the hill. It was the custom to stand in front of the tavern and look up the hill toward Winsted or at the brow of the hill and look down toward Canaan to watch for the top of the stage as it came into view. At midnight when the stage was due from Winsted, the rattle of the wheels could be heard as one sat in the tap room of the old tavern long before its arrival. It was a forbidding sight to see the start for Winsted at five o'clock on a winter's morning to connect with the early train for New York. The writer remembers well as a small boy the satisfaction his father took in giving financial support to the stage line so that the store keeper leaving Norfolk at dawn for New York, could return just before midnight, and it could be said that a business man of Norfolk could make a business trip to New York and back in one day. The amount of baggage allowed the traveller by stage coach in early colonial days was from fourteen to twenty pounds, and the small trunks of calf skin used then, are now a rare curiosity of modern times. The amount of baggage and the size of the trunk at the present time is in striking contrast to the allowance in colonial days. Imagine the difference between the Saratoga or wardrobe trunk of the present and the little calf skin

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

covered box fourteen pounds in weight, which could be carried in one hand.

Among many of the happenings on the Norfolk Green which the writer remembers, and which inspired in him a fondness for the horse, was the driving exhibition of Mr. Robbins Battell's horses. To Mr. Battell is due the credit of educating the community up to a high standard in the breeding of horses. There was no place in New England where a better type of horse could be found than was bred in Norfolk. Mr. Battell imported horses from abroad and also bred the Russian Orloff and the Arabian horse. The inspiration of Mr. Battell's example is visible in the exhibition of useful and valuable horses now seen in Norfolk at the Agricultural Show where, in 1915, beautiful types of horses, even prize winners in the New York and London horse shows were exhibited. The writer remembers well the exercising of Mr. Battell's horses in front of the Green and notably among these horses were Rupert, Pleasant Gale, Lemon Fair and later the Russian Orloffs. In previous years he owned Falcon and Black Hawk.

Coincident with these horse exhibitions was the drilling of the Norfolk Zouaves in front of the Green under Captain William H. Welch, who now is the most distinguished medical man of the present century.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Great credit is due to Miss Mary Eldridge for the wonderful display of fireworks on the Green on the Fourth of July in front of the Meeting House. Such elaborate exhibitions have become a tradition of Norfolk, and people gather from all parts of the town to witness them. Miss Eldridge's great generosity enabled the people for years to see fireworks that were superb and wonderful, which equalled if they did not surpass those of any town in New England.

Music has been intimately associated with the Norfolk Green. In 1882 Mr. Robbins Battell introduced the custom of giving band concerts on the Green, and from this without doubt originated the idea of the wonderful concerts given annually by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel. These concerts afford the people of Norfolk an opportunity of hearing the best music in the country because the greatest musicians are secured; and they have led up through various organizations to the formation of the Litchfield County Choral Union in 1899 to honor the memory of Mr. Robbins Battell. These wonderful concerts under the leadership of Mr. Richmond P. Paine, who has done so much to give them a world-wide reputation, have provided in a little over a decade, without any expense to the public, classical music to over 70,000 residents of this County.

The later concerts on the Green were held in The

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Music Shed, a unique structure finished in 1910 by the well-known architect M. E. K. Rossiter. It has a seating capacity of about two thousand, and possesses wonderful acoustic properties. In this shed are presented original compositions for initial rendition by men like Horatio Parker, George W. Chadwick, Sir Wm. Villien Stanford, Edgar Stillman Kelley, Henry F. Gilbert, Jean Sibelius, S. Coleridge-Taylor, Henry Hadley, Frederick A. Stock, and others. The orchestra consists of seventy-five musicians selected from the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and a chorus of nearly five hundred voices trained by Mr. Paine. Among the artists who have taken part in these concerts may be mentioned, Lillian Blauvelt, Louise Homer, Lillian Nordica, Emma Eames, Marie Rappold, Maud Powell, Alma Gluck, Florence Mulford, Margaret Keyes, Kathleen Parlow, George Hamlin, Herbert Witherspoon, Fritz Kreisler, Leo Schulz, Ernest Hutcheson, Riccardo Martin, Otto Stoeckert, Antonio Belluci, Edward P. Johnson, Herbert S. Billard, and a host of other famous artists. Among the conductors may be mentioned Richmond P. Paine, Arthur Mees, S. Coleridge-Taylor Victor Herbert and others. To the Norfolk Green is largely due the development of these great concerts which has made the town famous throughout the country.

In the old historic Town Meeting House on the



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Green has been given for nearly a quarter of a century a mid-summer musical entertainment for the benefit of the Norfolk Home Missionary Society by Miss Mary Eldridge. These concerts have been enjoyed and appreciated by the residents of Norfolk who were thus afforded another exceptional opportunity of listening to the best artists in the country. The list of singers and musicians at the last concert is an index of the character of the music and the reputation of the artists. Among the list on the programme are found Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Miss Edmond, Miss Stoddart, Miss van Essen, Miss Gwyn Jones, Mr. Beddoe, Mr. Thomas H. Thomas, Mr. Reed, Mr. Chalmers, Miss Vera Barstow with Mr. Charles Heinroth organist and conductor, Mr. Spross and Mr. Hoffmann, pianists. This programme is for only one of a score or more concerts of the same high standard and reputation.

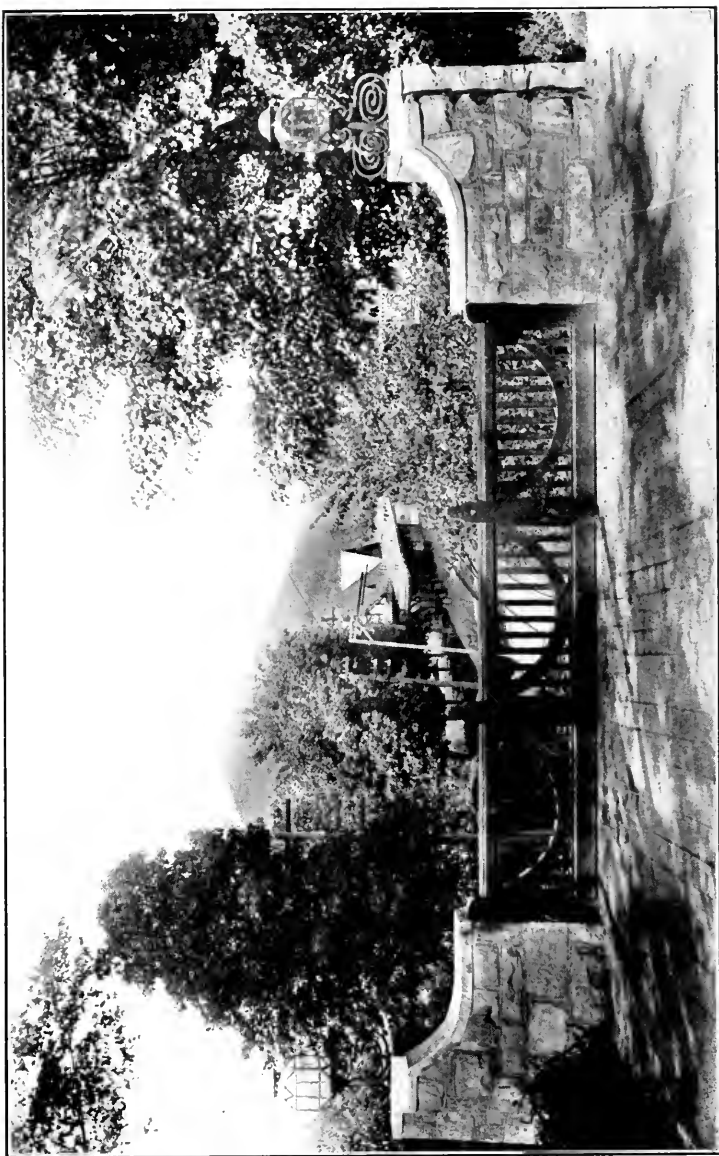
Besides these mid-summer concerts in the Meeting House on the Green, Miss Mary Eldridge has given other concerts at various times, much to the gratification and enjoyment of the village people. Among these may be mentioned an organ recital at which the famous English organist, Mr. Lamare, performed on the new Skinner organ, the gift of the Misses Eldridge. On another occasion a quartet of trumpeters from the Metropolitan Opera House from New York

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

City performed. These concerts are for the benefit of the Home Missionary Society.

On Palm Sunday and on Easter morning, on Christmas, and on Children's Day special music is provided in the Meeting House through the generosity of Miss Mary Eldridge for the enjoyment of the people. On Children's Day each child in the Sunday school is presented with a gift by Miss Mary Eldridge consisting of a potted plant of some beautiful flower which is carried home as a souvenir of the occasion.

Still other musical concerts have been provided through the liberality of Mrs. H. H. Bridgman, who has for many years given the people an opportunity to enjoy the best music in the country. These have of late been given in the Meeting House on Lincoln's birthday and some of the greatest artists of this country and Europe have participated in them. Instrumental concerts are given on the Green by Miss Mary Eldridge in August on Saturday afternoons, and the farmers as well as the residents of the village assemble around the Green to listen to the music. The Green on Christmas Eve, 1915, was the scene of another musical entertainment when the children of the village were all gathered together and the Christmas carols were sung by them under the leadership of Miss Kendall who deserves much praise for the musical training of the children of the village. The cus-



VIEW OF THE RAILROAD STATION, AND THE BRIDGE AT THE NORTH EASTERN CORNER OF THE GREEN



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

tom of a concert on the Green is a beautiful one, and appreciated by the community.

At the northeast corner of the Green is a beautiful vista which brings Haystack into full view. It is at this extreme point on the edge of the Green that the railroad emerges from under a bridge which crosses the highway and from here the station can be seen. This corner of the Green has been made most attractive through the generosity and artistic taste of Miss Isabella Eldridge, who has placed a fine ornamental railing at the end of the bridge as it overhangs the railroad track. At each end this connects with a granite wall which at each extremity is carried up a few feet in the form of a pier upon which is mounted a magnificent bronze lamp of exquisite design. This ornamental fence, forming a guard rail on the highway, is joined on its western end by a beautiful hedge behind which can be seen the Library, flower beds, as well as boxes filled with choice flowers and plants, the contribution of Miss Isabella Eldridge. The Library with its luxuriant vines, its beautiful flowers, its well trimmed hedges, its lovely trees, and its ever-flowing fountain, conspire to form with the granite wall and artistic balustrade and bronze lamps, a most dignified setting, and prevents the entrance of the railroad into the town and station from detracting from the beauty of the Green and thus demonstrates that what might

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

have been the effacement of the Green has been made its most attractive feature. The long and bitter fight to save the Green was victorious, and Miss Isabella Eldridge has proved that her venerable father was right when he contended that it was unnecessary to sacrifice the Green in order to allow the railroad to enter the village. This corner now so beautifully decorated by his daughter is a monument in itself to his memory: it associates his name forever with the preservation of the Village Green.

Through the kindness of Mrs. H. H. Bridgman, a beautiful community Christmas tree is yearly decorated on the Green. This Spruce tree is over eighty feet high, is illuminated with myriads of tiny many colored electric lights, and is continuously illuminated during the holidays. On Christmas and New Year's Eve cornet music is given in addition to the singing of carols by the children. To Mrs. Bridgman is due the thanks and gratitude of the children as well as the older folks for continuing this beautiful and quaint custom of old New England; it is another example of the generosity and liberality of the donor towards the people of her venerable and much beloved father's charge and a sacred testimony of affectionate esteem and regard for the people of her native town. It may be safely said that these ever recurring contributions to the happiness and welfare of the Norfolk people



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATED BY MR. H. H. BRIDGMAN





## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

have given her a most enviable place in the hearts of the little community; and this expression of her kind thought for her kinspeople on the Village Green adds a charm to the Green itself that makes the place sacred.

If what the writer has said about the Green will inspire the present generation to venerate it, to care for it, to protect it, to preserve it, to beautify it, the object of this brief historical paper will be fulfilled. The inhabitants of Norfolk should inculcate in the minds of the younger generation a feeling of reverence for the Green, for in this way only can a spirit be aroused to defend to the uttermost any encroachment upon its sacred precincts. The Norfolk Green is unique in beauty and location. It has always been the centre of activity, has always adhered to colonial traditions. It behooves the people of this town, young and old, to protect it from any unhallowed uses. Any perversion of its present usefulness should be viewed with suspicion and any attempt to change its character should be resisted with the same force that our forebears exercised to protect their homes upon the Green from hostile invasion of the Indians.



**SUMMARY OF DATES OF PRINCIPAL  
EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF  
NORFOLK\***



## SUMMARY OF DATES OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF NORFOLK\*

1748

Samuel Manross came from Farmington and settled in Norfolk erecting a log cabin on the site of the Meeting House.

1749

Edward Strickland came from Simsbury and settled in Norfolk.

1750

The first use of water power to run a saw mill in Norfolk. An act was passed ordering remainder of Norfolk to be sold at public auction at Middletown, Conn.

1751

Litchfield County was organized.

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\* This summary of dates has been compiled from the town records, Crissey's and Roys's *Historie*, public addresses, centennial sermons, and diaries,—notably those of the Rev. Thomas Robbins and Mrs. John A. Shepherd, and Miss Isabelle Eldridge's scrapbook—and from the *Winstead citizen* and the *Hartford Courant*, and from personal interviews with many residents of the town.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1754

The Assembly ordered an auction of the unsold part of Norfolk.

1755

The English planned war against the French.

1756

Population of town was 84. A Committee was appointed to lay out pondage for grist mill.

1757

A Committee to lay out grist mill was reported, also a Committee was appointed to build iron works.

1758

The Town of Norfolk was incorporated, with twenty-seven families. The first town meeting was held with forty-four legal voters. The first sermon was preached in Norfolk by Rev. Mr. Treat at the house of Mr. Richards.

1759

The first Meeting House was begun, and Noah Wetmore invited to preach on probation. The first grist mill was built. The first Meeting House was raised and covered. Rev. Mr. Peck supplied the pulpit.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1760

The town voted to hold service regularly every Sabbath, a horn to be blown at stated intervals to let the people know the time. The church was organized December 24. The town voted to build a pound.

1761

The Rev. Ami R. Robbins was ordained as first minister. The Sacrament of Lord's Supper was administered for the first time by a regular pastor. About fifty families were living in town at this time. The first country road was built from Canaan to New Hartford. Articles of church government were adopted.

1762

The Rev. Mr. Robbins opened the first high school or academy. He married Miss Eliza LeBaron of Plymouth, Mass. The town voted with Goshen to ask the General Assembly for liberty to hold a lottery to raise 100 pounds for public highways. The town voted to hire a man to sweep the church and shut the doors and windows.

1763

The town voted to give land to build iron works to be completed in 1765; also voted forty-five pounds in

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

lawful money for use in schooling and determined that town meetings should be held on the first Monday in December.

1764

There was no clock in Norfolk during the early ministry of Dr. Robbins. The time was kept by an hour glass. *Hartford Courant* only paper received.

1765

It was voted at town meeting to finish the Meeting House by a rate of two pence on the pound. The town voted that the rate be raised in good pine boards or good bar iron.

1766

First iron works was built in Norfolk. A pound was built on Giles Pettibone's land.

1767

Great revival of religion in Norfolk. Gallery floor of Meeting House was laid. The pulpit finished. The town voted to buy weights for a standard for the use of the town; also to remove all encroachments on highways.

1768

It was voted that if ten or even three families set up a school the town would pay.



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1769

The lower part of the Meeting House was finished and the Meeting House seated for the first time. It was voted that the pew next the pulpit on north side should be for Mr. Robbins. Voted rule for seating "one year age shall be accounted equal to five pound list. Seaters shall "dignify" the seats as they shall think proper.

1770

George Whitefield preached in Norfolk and was guest of Rev. Mr. Robbins. It was voted to pray the General Assembly to build road to Canaan and to set up a sign post on the Green near the Meeting House. The church was dignified and seated.

1771

The galleries in Meeting House were completed, a cushion for the pulpit procured, the Meeting House painted peach-blow color.

1772

The town voted to continue and enforce laws preventing rams running at large on the commons and in the highways.

1773

Daniel Burr, son of Ebenezer Burr, married Betty

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Brown, daughter of Titus Brown, one of the first settlers of Norfolk and a soldier in the Revolutionary War.

1774

Centre cemetery in Norfolk was purchased. The population of the town was 969 with three black slaves. Town voted to uphold action of Continental Congress at Philadelphia. Ezek Wilcox died of smallpox. A pest house was established. It was voted to raise money to purchase powder. Town voted that it has its right to direct singing in public worship.

1775

Norfolk sent twenty-four men to Lexington under Captain Gaylord. Choristers were chosen in town meeting. Selectmen voted to place a fence around Centre cemetery. It was voted to enlarge seats in gallery of church.

1776

Rev. Ami R. Robbins left Norfolk to be Chaplain of the Connecticut troops. Thomas Curtiss was killed in the Revolutionary War.

1777

Norfolk was first represented at General Assembly. Voted to build a school house on the Green for the

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

middle district 30 ft. long, 20 ft. wide. Fifty-six deaths occurred from dysentery this year. A part of Burgoyne's defeated army passed through Norfolk en route to Boston and encamped on the Green. The town voted to take care of families of soldiers enlisted in Continental Army.

1778

Elms were planted on Village Green. Thirty-eight deaths occurred this year. The town voted to agree to all but the eighth article of confederation proposed by Continental Congress. Voted that front seats in gallery and lower tier seats on each side be appropriated to singers; and that the town treasurer shall pay six pounds to any person killing a wolf or panther.

1779

Probate district of Norfolk was established. The town clerk was ordered to publish intentions of marriage. It was voted to pay wage of three pounds to every soldier drafted into seven months' service.

1780

It was voted to build a school house near Goshen, for the south part of the town. It was voted that soldiers be exempt from raising rate and that one-half

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

rate be allowed to the poor. Voted rate be raised in State bills or Continental bills and to divide town into classes to gain men to recruit the Continental Army.

1781

It was voted to give each soldier seven shillings per month from the time he marched away to suitable time for return home.

1782

Population of town was 1,246. The militia of Norfolk was divided into three companies. It was voted that the head constable be the crier to declare intention of marriage. Voted to seat singers: Basses—Men's front gallery; Tenors—Women's front gallery; Treble—Lower fore seats on women's side; Counter—Lower tier seats on Men's side. It was voted that the town be divided into three classes to provide recruits.

1783

A religious revival secured—thirty-three were converted. It was voted to build a school house on Titus Brown's farm. The children wrote on white birch, and ink was made from berries of sumach trees, and pens from goose quills. The Rev. Mr. Robbins went on a mission to the West.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1784

The revival continued—twenty-seven were converted. The town was divided into sixteen districts for care of highways, and voted to allow any person to set up horse sheds on the Green near the fences.

1785

The town voted to build more highways and repair and exchange old highways.

1786

The town voted to sell the three Statute books belonging to it at public auction.

1787

The Episcopal Society was organized. Five wolves were killed on Haystack Mountain. E. Balcom given liberty to erect a mill in the town in some convenient place.

1788

Elm trees and buttonwood trees were planted on the Green. Fifty-seven in all.

1789

Jehiel Saxton, first post rider, passed through Norfolk en route from New Haven to Lenox, Mass.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1790

Thirty families in Norfolk raised and spun 12,000 run of silk. Cemetery south end district was opened. The town ceased to superintend the choir.

1791

There was a great snow storm during this winter when the snow was six feet on the level on the Village Green. It was voted to supply suitable "stepping stones" for the Meeting House. Some large elm trees were planted on the Green.

1792..

Mr. Joseph Battell settled in Norfolk.

1793

The Meeting House was painted white. The town voted that selectmen draw their orders on town treasurer in the future.

1794

The tavern on the Green was built by Giles Pettibone, Jr., later kept by John A. Shepard. Ebenezer Burr was post rider between Litchfield via Goshen, Norfolk, Canaan to Salisbury, Conn. Zelpah Polly Grant born in Grantville, Conn.

1795

Rev. Mr. Robbins's salary was set at 90 pounds.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

He was sent on a mission to Vermont and Western New York. It was voted to purchase a piece of ground of Giles Pettibone for a burying place. It was voted that powder be bought for use on Field Day.

1796

A school society was organized and business transferred. William Walter, one of the first Representatives, died. It was voted to choose agents to General Assembly; also to buy convenient place for burial yard at nothwesterly part of town.

1797

It was voted to lay tax of two cents on the dollar for repairing highways, a part of this tax to be paid in work on highways, allowing seventy-five cents per day from May 10 to June 15; fifty cents per day from September 15 to October 20.

1798

It was voted in town meeting to expend \$12.00 for church music. James Mars, first slave sold in Norfolk, was bought by Mr. Munger. Greenswood turnpike was completed. It was voted to build such roads in the south part of town as selectmen thought necessary.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1799

A great revival of religion occurred. One hundred and sixty were added to the church. It was voted to erect trunpike gates (which were discontinued in 1872), and to pay damages caused in laying out of road from Hartford to Sheffield.

1800

The revival was still in progress. A stage line was inaugurated between Hartford and Albany. Joseph Battell leased the land and built a store on the corner next to Shepard Hotel. It was voted to make arrangements for the 22nd day of February to publicly lament the death of General Washington. It was voted to sell part of Green to Joseph Battell.

1801

The Independence of the United States celebrated. It was voted that the town meetings be held on the first Monday in Novmber, and also that \$40.00 be paid for hiring a singing master the coming winter.

1802

The course of the road south of Meeting House was established. It was voted that no person shall allow his or her boar to run at large under penalty of \$1.67; that the selectmen procure a book to keep school society records.



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1803

A bounty of six pence offered on every crow's head; and a bounty of \$1.50 on every wild cat.

1804

The Post Office in Norfolk was established in Ariel Lawrence's house. Michael Mills, the first postmaster, died this year.

1805

Sixty dollars was given for church music. A woolen factory was established in Norfolk. It was voted that the seating committee give seats to all unmarried males of 30 years of age, and to females of 27 years, if they apply for same.

1806

Joseph Battell, Jr., was born in Norfolk.

1807

The town voted that sixty dollars be given for music and three cents on a dollar on lists for highways.

1808

It was voted that two-thirds of each man's rate should be worked out on highways and that seats be given to any poor or destitute in the church.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1809

The Village Green was ploughed up and levelled. Bounty of twenty-five cents was offered on every old fox and twelve and one-half cents on every young fox. It was voted to sell at public vendue at the sign post on the Green all the statutes of Connecticut.

1810

Number of inhabitants in town was 1,441.

1811

A half century anniversary sermon was preached by Dr. Robbins. There were 549 members of the church at this time and 1,277 were baptized during Rev. A. R. Robbins's pastorate. Committee appointed to ascertain the centre of the town with a view to building a new Meeting House, to be 60 feet long and 50 feet wide with a steeple and a bell, and voted to sell old Meeting House and use the proceeds for painting new Meeting House.

1812

A stage line opened for travel between New York and Albany via Norfolk. Laura Hawley Thurston was born in Norfolk.

1813

The first Meeting House was removed. Norfolk

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Ecclesiastical Society formed from members of the church and society of the town. Rev. M. Robbins died on November 30. It was voted that a Meeting House be erected six feet south of the old one; finished in the square body and slips. Two dollars bounty offered for every wild cat.

1814

It was voted to pay Michael F. Mills \$150.00 for his services as agent for building Meeting House which was completed this year. A person was hired to ring church bell for services and funerals and at nine o'clock at night.

1815

It was voted to call Mr. Ralph Emerson as pastor of the church and society, salary to be \$700.00 per year. It was voted that the Ecclesiastical Society transact its business, and not the town. Major James Shepard came to Norfolk.

1816

Lyman Beecher preached at ordination of Ralph Emerson. A Committee was appointed to dignify seats. About this time the Post Office was moved to the Green; Joseph Jones was the postmaster.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1817

It was voted at town meeting to build a Conference room on the floor above the school house of the middle district. Constitution of the Ecclesiastical Society was adopted. Ecclesiastical fund was started to defray church expenses.

1818

The first nuts and bolts made by machinery were made in Norfolk. The cemetery in South Norfolk was opened.

1819

A school house and conference on second floor was built where the present stone chapel now stands. The office of Listers was discontinued when Assessors and Board of Relief were appointed.

1820

Population of town was 1,422. James Shepard was the first selectman. Eliza A. Shepard and who later married Alfred L. Dennis of Newark, N. J., was born. Town voted to allow Assessors seventy-five cents for their services.

1821

A four-horse stage line was established between New York and Albany via Norfolk. Members of

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

Legislature came from New York to New Haven by steamboat and thence to Albany via Norfolk thus saving fifty miles of travelling by stage coach. A Sunday school was organized.

1822

First organ put in Congregational Church. Norfolk library company formed—142 volumes purchased.

1823

Joseph Battell was graduated from Middlebury College, Vt.

1824

Joseph Battell gave a sum of money to the Ecclesiastical Society the interest of which was \$50.00 annually for the improvement of sacred music. Zelpah Polly Grant of Norfolk "was formally installed the first head of the first college for women in our country if not in the world." This was called the Adams Female Academy at Derry, N. H. She helped also to organize Mt. Holyoke Seminary and her pupil, Miss Lyman, was the first principal of Vassar College.

1825- 1816

A gold cross was placed on the steeple of the Meeting House, a most unusual procedure for a Congrega-

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

tional church. This cross is said to have been presented by the Rev. Thomas Robbins.

1826

Association for prohibition of sacred music in connection with County organizations. Ex-President John Quincy Adams and ex-President Thomas Jefferson died same day and that day was the Fourth of July.

1827

Mr. Frederick M. Shepard was born. A great revival of religion occurred under Rev. Dr. Ralph Emerson. It was voted to restrain all animals from running wild.

1828

Thirty heads of families reside in town who were descendants of the original forty-four in 1758. Miss Alice Welch kept a select school in the Conference room. The number of highway districts was increased to twenty-two.

1829

The Rev. Mr. Emerson was elected a Professor in Andover Theological Seminary. Miss Welch left Norfolk to teach in Mr. Jos. Emerson's school in Byfield, Massachusetts. Branch of the Litchfield County Temperance Society organized in Norfolk.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1830

Captain John Dewel built his stone house and scythe shop in West Norfolk.

1831

The Battell store was burglarized, \$1,500 stolen by Barzel Treat. Society was instructed to buy two box stoves to heat the Meeting House. Another revival of religion. It was voted that selectmen contract for whole support of town poor.

1832

The Rev. Dr. Joseph Eldridge was ordained pastor April 25th. Nathaniel Roys died in his 100th year.

1833

Mr. Israel Crissey died. A \$5 bounty was offered on a wild cat. It was voted that the town procure a hearse and a harness, and suitable building where they were to be kept.

1834

Blinds were put on the Meeting House windows.

1835

A petition was signed by 379 persons against spirit licenses.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1836

Introduction of Catholicity in Norfolk, Ct. General Association of Connecticut met here on June 21st. M. and M. C. Ryan began business as merchants.

1837

Odessa wheat was brought to Norfolk and made into flour. A town deposit fund was established and it was voted that the selectmen add ten feet on west side of bridge in centre near Jas. Shepard's if they shall think proper.

1838

Norfolk was made a probate district and was separated from Winchester and Colebrook. It was voted at town meeting that the surplus fund was to be used half for school and half for ordinary expenses of town.

1839

Mr. Robbins Battell graduated from Yale College. Norfolk Academy organized, John F. Norton, principal. The custom of raising the monument on Haystack Mountain was abandoned this year. The town voted a license to James and John A. Shepard, tavern keepers, to sell wines and spirituous liquors.



## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1840

First abolition vote cast in Norfolk. Mr. Warren Cone sold his business of making scythes to Mr. Willard Dutton. The present Academy bought at a cost of \$2,000 on east side of Green. Town meeting to be held first Monday in October.

1841

Joseph Battell died. The Methodist Episcopal church was built. Twenty-one abolition votes cast in town. Twenty-five members added to the church under Dr. Eldridge's pastorate. Alfred L. Dennis married to Eliza A. Shepard in the Meeting House on the Green.

1842

Zelpah Polly Grant married to Hon. Wm. B. Banister. Committee was appointed to build chimneys in the Meeting House. Town voted to prohibit fishing with a seine—penalty \$10.

1843

Huntington & Day built their puddling forge on Blackberry River. Wm. Lawrence built a store on northeast corner of Green. Town voted to assess the real estate of the town anew and to survey the Centre Public Green and establish permanent bounds.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1844

Centennial address was given by Rev. Thos. Robins, D.D. Auren Roys History of Norfolk was published, from which many facts have been gleaned for this Summary.

1845

A woollen manufactory was started by J. & E. E. Ryan and J. S. Kilbourn & Son.

1846

Extensive alterations were made in the Meeting House. Mr. Wm. B. Rice began teaching in academy. People left Norfolk early in the morning and reached New York for supper, taking train at Canaan. Town meeting held in Meeting House until 1846; after this date they were held in town hall.

1847

The Strong fund was made to the town with selectmen as trustees.

1848

Mr. Wm. Lawrence, partner of Jos. Battell, sold his store and moved to Northampton, Mass. The town voted to pay half the expenses incurred in painting the Academy.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1849

Miss Margaret Nettleton opened her private school. Mr. Robbins Battell married Miss Ellen R. Mills, of Newark, N. J. The town voted to enclose public Green with a fence, also to build a suitable fence and gates for Centre burying ground.

1850

The Ryans built a four-story factory. Trees were set out on the Green, consisting of one of each kind of native trees, by Wm. B. Rice. The town voted to build a road across the meadows from the sand bank to the grist mill. This road passes in front of the Norfolk Agricultural Fair grounds. Prof. William H. Welch born in Norfolk, Ct.

1851

Population 1,641. It was voted to authorize committee to pay \$500 for new organ.

1852

Mr. A. L. Dennis rebuilt the Dennison house and was the first summer resident of Norfolk. The second organ placed in the Congregational church. Mr. Jos. Battell gave \$200 toward the \$500. Post office was kept for a while in Shepard's Tavern until this year, when it was moved into the store adjoining. M. H. Mills was the postmaster.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1853

Church granted Rev. Dr. Eldridge permission to go to Europe. Horse block placed near the Meeting House. Hoe shop built on Patmos Island by W. B. Stevens and A. P. Lawrence. John B. Gough, the great temperance orator, delivered an address on this subject in the Meeting House. The town voted to alter the fence on the Green so that the east line of the same be shortened one length, making the south line nearly straight.

1854

Welaka Woolen Mills Company organized, with Dr. W. W. Welch as President; also Lawrence Machine Co. W. E. Dennis was born in the house which subsequently became the Parsonage on the Green until about 1915. Town voted that the grass in public Green be sold at public auction. Mr. Joseph Battell gave \$5,000 to establish a fund for music in Yale College.

1855

The S. D. Northway Manufacturing Company was organized at South Norfolk, capital \$25,000. Under President Pierce's administration the Post Office was moved to a point midway between the Green and the city, so called, nearly opposite the present office. Sign posts were erected at West and South Norfolk.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1856

South Norfolk became a thriving village. The Norfolk bank was chartered with \$100,000; Jas. H. Shepard started business in Stevens's block.

1857

Dissolution of firm of Ryans, woollen manufacturers, occurred. Great religious revival took place in Norfolk. Norfolk bank building was finished. The town voted to purchase a cottage stove for use in Town Hall.

1858

A great celebration was held August 17th on account of the laying of the Atlantic cable and the reception of a message from the Queen of England. Mr. Rice left Norfolk to live in Pittsfield, Mass.

1859

Mr. Joshua Moses, Jr., built a log house on the site which is at present the residence of Dr. Frederic S. Dennis. The church of the Immaculate Conception was built.

1860

Population of the town was 1,802. The Norfolk Savings Bank was incorporated. The town voted to enlarge Centre Cemetery.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1861

Post Office moved into a store on the Green for some eight years. Rev. Jos. Eldridge preached on the subject "Does the Bible Sanction Slavery?" The funeral of Samuel Mills occurred. The funeral of the first Norfolk soldier who died in the Civil War. Asa G. Pettibone was elected President of the Norfolk bank. Fort Sumter fired on and the flag hauled down. Eliza Dennis born in the house which later became the parsonage, now the residence of Rev. Wm. F. Stearns.

1862

The Litchfield County Regiment enlisted for Civil War; Norfolk boys were in this regiment.

1863

The Norfolk and New Brunswick Hosiery Co. was organized and put in full operation.

1864

Corporal G. H. Pendleton died as a result of bullet wound at Winchester, Va. Adjutant Samuel C. Barnum died as a result of a bullet wound.

1865

Miss Lyman, a pupil of Zelpah Polly Grant of Norfolk, became the first principal of Vassar College.

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Grandman Welch, who was the first superintendent of the Sunday school, resigned and Miss Anna Battell succeeded her in that office. The flag on Fort Sumter was raised. Lee surrendered. Lincoln was assassinated.

1866

Mr. Eldridge's salary was raised to \$1,500 per annum. Oliver B. Butler died. The ringing of the noon and the nine o'clock bell in the Meeting House was discontinued about this time.

1867

Mrs. Jonathan Pettibone, daughter of Hopestill Welch, died.

1868

The soldiers' monument placed on Green. Major Bushnell Knapp died in his 92d year.

1869

The town voted to issue bonds not to exceed \$41,500 for the incorporation of Connecticut Western Railroad Company.

1870

The Norfolk Bank went into liquidation. The present Meeting House narrowly escaped destruction

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by a fire under the gallery. The Rev. Dr. Joseph Eldridge made his famous speech in defence of the Village Green from appropriation by the railroad company.

1871

Capt. John Dewell died. The first train passed through Norfolk at highest point in the State for a railroad. The Norfolk people were scandalized by the passage through town on Sunday of a construction train.

1872

Collection of toll at toll-gate at West Norfolk discontinued. J. N. Cowles and J. B. Eldridge formed a partnership and carried on a banking business. First milk train passed through Norfolk.

1873

The Norfolk Silk Company was organized on Patmos Island.

1874

Death of Joseph Battell, Jr., also Zelpah Polly Grant. Dr. Eldridge tendered his resignation as pastor on account of ill health and was honorably dismissed. The Stevens block was enlarged and became



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the Stevens Hotel this year. Mr. Joseph Battell gave by bequest \$200,000 to build Battell Chapel, Yale College.

1875

Death of Rev. Dr. Joseph Eldridge occurred March 31st. First sale of seats in church was held. Centre cemetery was enlarged.

1876

Rev. John Gleason installed as pastor. Mrs. Larnard gave an organ to Yale College for the Battell Chapel.

1877

Mr. Robbins Battell and Miss Anna Battell established a Professorship of American History. Conference room remodeled at expense of \$450.

1878

Mrs. Jos. Eldridge died June 6th. Aetna Silk Company was formed. Norfolk chimes were presented by Mr. Robbins Battell.

1880

Levi Shepard died, at the age of 95; also Chas. M. Ryan. Population of town, 1,418. The inscription

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was placed on elm at corner of Green by Rev. J. A. Gleason. Extensive church repairs were made and stained glass windows and memorial tablets added.

1881

Free library established in Mr. G. W. Scoville's house by Miss Isabella Eldridge. Mrs. A. L. Dennis died in Newark, N. J.

1882

Mr. Thos. Tibbals, grandfather of Capt. Auren Tibbals, died.

1883

The town voted to construct stone bridge over the brook near Sam Canfield's house, not to exceed \$1,000.

1884

The Robbins school opened this year. It was founded by Anna and Robbins Battell. The present village hall was built. Dillers cornet octet from New York gave a concert on the Green.

1885

The old store on the northeast corner of the Green built by Wm. Lawrence collapsed and fell to ruins. Rev. John De Peu acting pastor.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

1886

Rev. John De Peu was installed pastor of the church in Norfolk. A tower was built on Haystack Mountain, and also a carriage road, by Mr. Robbins Battell. A new centre school house was built on City meadows.

1887

Robbins Battell bought out the corporation which owned the academy. The old conference room building torn down to make room for the present stone chapel. Dr. L. Duncan Bulkley purchased his farm in Norfolk.

1888

The year of the great blizzard; snow from four to six feet on the level, and in drifts eighteen to twenty feet on the Green. Dedication of Battell Chapel.

1889

Miss Anna Battell died. Miss Mary Eldridge became Lady Superintendent of the Sunday school. Opening of the new library by Miss Isabel Eldridge. A memorial fountain was built on south end of the Green by Miss Mary Eldridge in memory of Mr. Jos. Battell. Mr. D. H. Rowland built his summer home.

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1890

Mr. Alfred L. Dennis died in Newark, N. J. The population of Norfolk was 1,546. A new lodge was built at Lake Wangum. Dr. E. H. Peaslee purchased the land upon which he later built his summer home. Mr. Theo. Lyman and Prof. Edw. Williams built their summer homes.

1891

Frederick S. Spaulding, editor of the *Norfolk Tower*, died. First full report of the Norfolk library was made by Edw. E. Swift, who stated that over 22,000 visitors had been in the building and that over 10,000 volumes were in circulation. Prof. G. J. Stoeckel's colonial house built on the Litchfield road. Mr. R. A. Dorman built his summer home.

1892

Opening of Eldridge Gymnasium. Third organ put in Congregational Church, presented by Miss Sara B. Eldridge. The church gallery was enlarged. Road built on Crissey Hill. Dr. Frederic S. Dennis purchased his farm on Litchfield Road.

1893

Presentation of a lot to the Episcopal Society for a church by Frederick M. Shepard. The Norfolk water

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works were incorporated. A medal was awarded to Mrs. J. C. Kendall by Columbian Exposition for photographs of Norfolk. Mr. Eugene Smith built his house and Mr. Charles L. Mead purchased his residence, which is now occupied by his son, Mr. Larkin G. Mead.

1894

The Bassett house, on the land between the Eldridge property and the Chapel, was purchased and torn down by the Misses Eldridge. Grant Street was opened. Prof. Frank Goodnow, President Johns Hopkins University, built his residence on Litchfield Road; also Wm. H. Moseley, on Laurel Way.

1895

Mr. Robbins Battell, who was called the father of modern Norfolk, died.

1896

Hiram P. Lawrence was elected President of the Norfolk bank. The water supply was in operation. The Bridgman house on Fox Hill was built. Mr. McLean assumed the management of the Hillhurst Hotel.

1897

Phillip Battell died. Thurston's block was torn down. Rev. John De Peu resigned his pastorate and

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Rev. Wm. F. Stearns was installed as pastor. Golf grounds were opened by Miss Isabella Eldridge. The Haystack belevedere blown down. The first meeting of the Litchfield University Club was held. Prof. M. I. Pupin purchased his farm and Mr. Chas. A. Spoffard built his summer residence.

1898

Ralph I. Crissey was elected President of the bank. A lot was purchased by Catholic Society for the cemetery. Terrible ice storm. A large elm on the Green split in the middle, and one-half fell on the Town Hall. Norfolk streets lighted by electricity. New railway station was built.

1899

A sewer district was formed and the work completed. Norfolk library celebrated the tenth anniversary. The first home missionary concert was held in the church. Rev. Dr. Chas. P. Thompson purchased the Knapp house. Mr. C. M. Howard bought the Cooper farm and Dr. Theodore W. Moses his place on Litchfield Road.

1900

Mr. Norman Riggs died. A memorial tablet to Miss Sara Eldridge placed on panel of the organ in

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the church. Litchfield choral union was organized. Mr. Winthrop Cone built his residence on Litchfield Road.

### 1901

Funeral of Mr. Joseph Battell Eldridge was held in the Congregational church. Collar Bros.' store, between the library and the bridge, was sold.

### 1902

A volunteer fire department was organized. Prof. H. A. Todd, of Columbia University, purchased Crissey Hill.

### 1903

Matthew Higgins, a hero of the Crimean War, died. He belonged to the Queens Guard, and was supposed to be the only survivor from Connecticut. Dr. Wm. Porter altered the Frederick Porter house and became a summer resident.

### 1904

Collar Bros. store was torn down on the northeast corner of the Green. A retaining wall was built and iron railing and posts given by Miss Isabella Eldridge. Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel gave the first concert in new music shed, the occasion being the anniversary of their wedding. A kindergarten was added to the

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Centre school. A sun dial was placed on the Memorial Fountain on the Green. Mrs. Haddock purchased land on Litchfield Road, and later built her present residence. Mr. A. I. Smith built his house.

1905

Mark Twain spent the summer in Norfolk. He occupied the Breitengier house, which subsequently burned down; later a bungalow was built by Rev. Mr. Oldham on the old site in 1916. Mr. Chas. Bigelow purchased the Brown farm and built his beautiful house; also Dr. E. Harlow bought the Rev. Dr. Bliss's house.

1906

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the library by Miss Isabella Eldridge was celebrated. Mr. Chas. Hopkins Clark of Hartford lectured on the Philippines. Mr. Barnard purchased the land upon which the house now stands, occupied by Mrs. Barnard and Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Knox. Mrs. Jones purchased Mostly Hall, now owned and occupied by Mrs. Flagg and Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Post.

1907

Fire Chief Croker and Dr. H. M. Archer visited Norfolk to inspect and instruct the fire department.



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Prof. Gustave Stoeckel died. Mr. Frederick M. Shepard gave a fire bell to Norfolk. Hon. Robbins Battell Stoeckel purchased and built his house on Litchfield Road; also Dr. Edward Quintard purchased his summer residence.

### 1908

Mr. Frederic C. Walcott purchased the Burr farm. Deacon and Mrs. Seldon celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. A stone bungalow was built on Dennis Hill, commanding a magnificent view of the surrounding country. It was designed by Mr. Taylor, a resident of Norfolk. Mrs. N. H. Jenkins built her bungalow, and Miss Elsie Farnum built her summer house on Litchfield Road, and Rev. H. E. Adriance purchased his residence.

### 1909

The Norfolk library celebrates its twentieth anniversary. Concerts on the Green Saturday afternoons during July and August were given by Miss Mary Eldridge. Hon. Judge ~~H. Albert~~ Jenks purchased his house on Greenwoods Road. *Almet F.*

### 1910

The Norfolk Agricultural Association was organized by Mrs. Frederic S. Dennis, who was elected

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President, and held its first fair. Mr. H. H. Bridgman was elected President of the Board of Trustees of Hartford Theological Seminary. Church organ was remodelled and enlarged. The church observed its 150th anniversary. The Shepard building was erected and is now occupied by Brown Company.

### 1911

Miss Isabel Goodnow, daughter of President Frank Goodnow, of Johns Hopkins University, was married in Norfolk.

### 1912

Money was subscribed for new public school for Norfolk on site of Myron Clark's store. Geo. B. Case of New York purchased Sunset Ridge farm. Boy Scouts were organized in Norfolk under Major W. E. Dennis, Jr., an officer of the American Boy Scouts. Band concert was given on the Green by band of 10th Cavalry, U. S. Army, while passing through Norfolk. Country Club was organized and occupied the gymnasium building. Dr. J. N. Teeter built his summer home.

### 1913

Two artificial lakes were constructed by Geo. B. Case and F. C. Walcott and Starling Childs. James

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B. Mabon, a summer resident, was elected President of the New York Stock Exchange. Ex-President and Mrs. Taft visited Norfolk as guests of Dr. and Mrs. Frederic S. Dennis. Frederick M. Shepard died. Amos Barnes purchased the Thompson house for his summer residence.

### 1914

The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Litchfield County Medical Society was held in Norfolk Country Club and a reception was given by Dr. Dennis at his bungalow, at which Ex-President Taft and Professor Wm. H. Welch were present as guests. New public school was finished. The first Community Christmas on the Green. Mrs. Sarah Pettibone and her daughter, Miss Helen, moved into the house now known as "The Willows," at the foot of the Green and on the site of this house stood the Miss Margaret Nettleton school, where formerly Major James Shepard lived when he came to Norfolk in 1815.

### 1915

Governor Holcomb of Connecticut and Mr. Howard Elliott, President of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railway Company, were invited guests to the Norfolk Agricultural Fair, of which Mrs. Frederic S. Dennis is President. Mr. Elliott came

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in a special train. Governor Holcomb and Mr. Elliott addressed the farmers of Litchfield County and his guests. Rev. Wm. F. Stearns resigned. "Fête of all nations" held on grounds of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stoeckel. Rev. John Barstow acting pastor. Norfolk Manufacturing Company organized in the old Centre school in the meadows. Second Community Christmas Tree was decorated on the Green.

### 1916

The Agricultural Fair was not held this year owing to the epidemic of infantile paralysis throughout the State and country. A grandstand was presented to the association, a gift from Mr. Thomas Cochran, of the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co.

### 1917

Mrs. Frederic S. Dennis resigned the Presidency of the Norfolk Agricultural Society, and Mr. Theron Rockwell was elected to the office of President. Eldridge Bridgman, Edwin H. Adriance and James B. Babon, Jr., went to France to serve in the American Ambulance Corps in the great European war—young men of whom Norfolk is justly proud.

## THE NORFOLK VILLAGE GREEN

### ELEVATIONS ABOUT NORFOLK

Bear Mountain	2,354 feet
Mt. Bradford	1,930 feet
Bald Mountain	1,763 feet
Mohawk Mountain	1,653 feet
Ivy Mountain	1,633 feet
Hay Stack Mountain	1,633 feet
Dutton Hill	1,632 feet
Dennis Hill	1,620 feet
Summit R. R. Station	1,336 feet
(Highest R. R. point in Connecticut)	



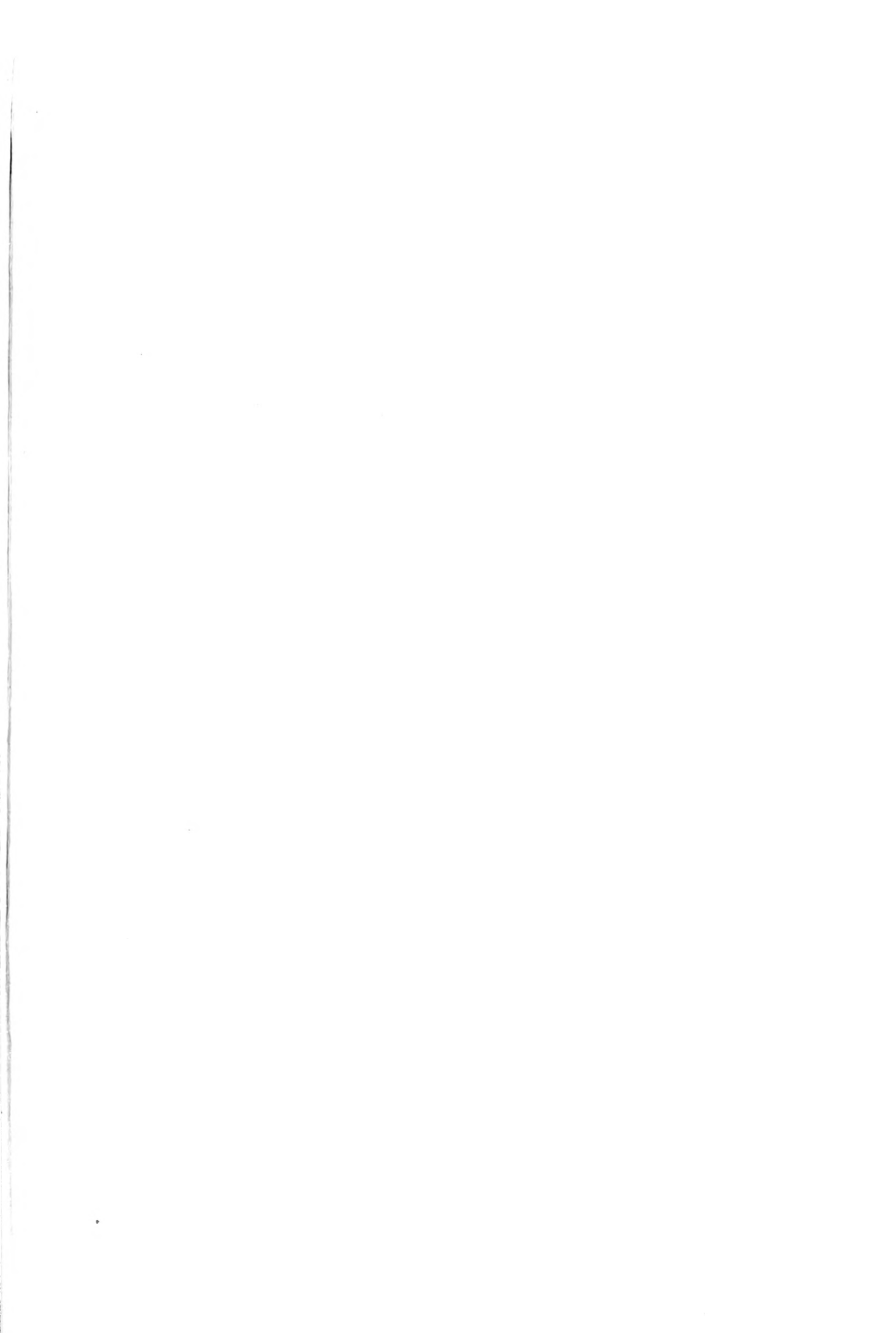












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